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GLIMPSES OF THE UNIVERSITY AT WORK FROM 1907 UNTIL THE FIRST WORLD WAR (I)[1]

SIR ROBERT FALCONER

AT the request of the Editors I will try to recall for the QUARTERLY some of the aspects of University life from my appointment as President until the first Great War. At the end of March, 1907, just before my wife and I were about to sail from Boston for the Mediterranean to spend the summer in Europe, I was, to my utter surprise, asked to come to Toronto on my way, to meet the Governors of the University, who were then endeavouring to secure a President. I had heard that Professor (now Sir Michael) Sadler of Manchester had been approached but could not then leave England. The interested academic public of Canada were just as much surprised as I had been at the proposal, to learn a few weeks later that an unknown young Principal of a Presbyterian College in Halifax had been appointed, and they wondered whether it was not a very rash decision. All who knew the situation in Toronto regarded the position as no less difficult, and even hazardous, than it was important. Rumour certainly did not minimize the clashings of interests, collegiate and personal, which complicated the University problems. At the same time, the new constitution placed far more responsibility upon the incoming President than any of his predecessors had carried. All this gave me much thought on our ocean voyage, but a cable "Unanimous" from Mr B. E. Walker which reached me at Naples, and to which I replied "Returning," brought us back to London after a three weeks' dash to Greece; and there I read in Canadian papers that the appointment had been made. In later days when I sometimes wondered whether I could hold my footing in the swift and strong current, I was heartened by the remembrance that the appointment had not been due in any sense to my seeking. I was told that when the search for a President began the idea prevailed in some quarters that, owing to the existence of the Federated Colleges, nominations of clergymen should not be entertained. On the other hand, a somewhat tactless, though not ill-disposed observer re-

[1]This is the first of two articles on the subject, written at our special request, by Sir Robert Falconer. The second will appear in the July issue. (EDITORS' NOTE)

marked to me that such an appointment might have been made less easily in some other Canadian cities than in Toronto "the good." It was more than hinted to me that I should be wise in keeping out of pulpits, a piece of advice which I was very ready to follow, all the more that I had never been in a pastorate. One note of satisfaction in the mind of the doubtful public was the fact that a Canadian had been found for the place.

The Board of Governors gave me a cordial welcome at a luncheon at the house of Mr John Hoskin, their chairman, in the leafy month of June, when, in the presence of representatives of the University staff, they formally appointed me to the Presidency. That Board consisted of some very distinguished men, five of them having been members of the University Commission which had constructed the new constitution. These were Sir William Meredith, Mr Goldwin Smith, Mr Joseph Flavelle, who had been its chairman, Mr B. E. Walker and the Rev. D. Bruce Macdonald. The Rev. Canon Cody, who also had been on the Commission, had not been made a Governor because he was then on the teaching staff of Wycliffe College; nor had Dr A. H. U. Colquhoun, Deputy Minister of Education, who had been its secretary.

Sir William Meredith, Chancellor of the University, a handsome figure who adorned Convocation, was a forceful character. As one of the Chief Justices of the province he took no open part in politics, but his opinions carried great weight with his intimate friend, Sir James Whitney, then Premier of the province, to whom was due the favourable University legislation. Proposals for expenditure even in small detail had to pass the Chancellor's exact scrutiny, and when estimates rose it was because he was satisfied that the increase could not be avoided, or sometimes against his protest. Of strong personality, he often clashed with others no less strong, such as Mr Flavelle and Mr Walker. The atmosphere, however, if often bracing was clear, and gusts soon passed without permanent damage. In spite of frequent brusqueness in committee Sir William was very genial in private and was deeply touched by human distress, as I had reason to discover during the War.

Mr (later Sir Joseph) Flavelle understood the spirit and letter of the University Act better than anyone else. It was a proof of his great natural ability that, with only average schooling and the experience of workaday business, he had envisaged so thoroughly the University problems in Toronto, and had such a clear apprecia-

tion of the meaning of pure science and scholarship. No less important for both the University and the general public was the work he did in creating a new constitution for the Toronto General Hospital. He led in the erection of a thoroughly modern building on a new site, and secured for the University such controlling privileges in staff appointments, not without some heart-burnings, that he made it to all intents and purposes a University hospital with exclusive direction of material for clinical instruction. Complete unified control of all teaching in medicine, surgery and other branches came only after the War, through the handsome benefaction of $500,000 from Sir John and Lady Eaton and additional gifts from the Rockefeller Foundation. But Sir Joseph Flavelle had given the initial impulse to the ideal which has been realized in the present far-famed Hospital and Faculty of Medicine. Enlarged privileges for the Faculty were also granted in St Michael's, Sick Children's and Western Hospitals, all of which made great strides forward.

Mr B. E. Walker (later Sir Edmund) had long been a trustee of University College and a member of the University Senate, and had taken a keen interest in them. He was probably the most outstanding banker of his day in Canada, was an amateur geologist of no mean accomplishment, and a connoisseur in the fine arts. He was versed as few were in the resources of Canada, and surpassed most in optimism for her future. With a sensitive artistic temper, quick in perception, often impulsive in action, in appearance the refined gentleman, he irritated some persons, but no one loved the University more or understood its ideals better. He told me more than once that if it had been with him a matter of choice he would have preferred an academic life to any other. As chairman of the property committee he took pleasure in discussing with Mr Darling, the architect, the design and placing of buildings, and we had frequent talks when he dropped in to see me on his way to his office. Probably his most enduring work was his success in unifying scattered museums and collections into the Royal Ontario Museum. By the government, in 1912, he was appointed the first chairman of the new Museum Trustees, under whom lies the direction of the several Museums by University heads of departments. Half of the upkeep of the Museums, apart from University salaries, comes from the government, the other half from the University.

The most widely distinguished member of the Board of Governors was Mr Goldwin Smith. Once Regius Professor of Modern History in Oxford, a master of classical English, a celebrity in Britain and in the United States, an English gentleman of integrity and high dignity, he lived as a lonely survival in an alien environment. At eighty-four his active influence on the public, never very great, had ceased; but, through his unique prestige, his interest in the University did more for it in commending it to the general mind than any participation by him in the discussions of the Board. He died in 1910.

The fifth member of the University Commission on the Board was the Rev. D. Bruce Macdonald. He had been one of the two representatives of the graduates of University College, the other being Canon H. J. Cody. In addition to his excellent business capacity and careful attention to detail, Dr Macdonald brought an unrivalled experience in the athletic and health activities of undergraduate life, and his opinion in these matters was rarely questioned.

Of the other members of the original Board only two are still living: the Right Hon. Sir Thomas White, and the Hon. H. T. Kelly, until recently Justice of the Supreme Court of Ontario. Sir Thomas was chairman of the finance committee of the Board until he joined Sir Robert Borden's Cabinet in 1911, and his work in setting the budgets on a sound basis was of the highest value, while on general policies he would size up a situation with realistic but open-minded insight. For kindly wisdom and high academic ideals Mr Justice Kelly was second to none. Others also I must mention: Sir Charles Moss, Chief Justice of Ontario, had long been connected with University College, and his brother, the Hon. Thomas Moss, had been the most brilliant graduate of King's College. Of balanced judgment, clear-headed, charitable, devout, Sir Charles was the best-loved man on the Board. Then there was Sir Edmund Osler, who possessed unusual influence in the city. He had strong family ties with Trinity College, and his brother, Mr Justice Featherston Osler, represented Trinity on the Senate for many years with fine impartiality and legal acumen. By nature in all things conservative, Sir Edmund was moved by deep feeling. In academic opinions he often had the advantage of the experience of Sir William Osler of Oxford, and he was ever generous with specific gifts for medical research and post-graduate fellowships.

Of very different antecedents and types were Dr J. A. Macdonald, editor of the *Globe*, and the Rev. Father Teefy, both alumni of University College. The former had been an old friend of mine, and remained so until the end of his too short life. He gave intelligent and enthusiastic support, without regard for party politics, to the University as a centre of culture, and loved it sincerely. Dr Teefy was a man of great integrity, weighty judgment, dignified, genial and co-operative. His interpretation of the spirit of St Michael's College went far to secure for it the goodwill and confidence of the other Colleges.

On the Board there were two especially generous benefactors: Mr Chester Massey and Mr E. C. Whitney. Mr Massey, gentle, wise and benevolent, was unable by reason of his delicate health to take that active part in the deliberations of the Board which his abilities would have warranted. The Massey family had long been supporters of Victoria College and were close friends of Dr Burwash. Through him Mrs Massey Treble offered to build and equip a laboratory for Household Science if the University would create such a faculty. Without stint she had her architect construct its palatial quarters, and at her death the University became heir to $100,000 for the endowment of the Faculty, which has grown rapidly and filled a most important place in the education of the women of the province and indeed of the Dominion. Mr Chester Massey made gifts to the University in addition to those to Victoria, but his name will always be chiefly associated with Hart House. Its origination came about on this wise. There was urgent need for an organ in the new Convocation Hall. As I knew that the family had long been interested in music, I went to see Mr Chester Massey in regard to it. At the same time we talked freely about the effort that was on foot by friends of the University Y.M.C.A. to get a new building to replace the then utterly inadequate quarters, Mr Massey himself being one of those friends. He listened most sympathetically, but said that his son Vincent (now Canada's High Commissioner in London, but then just graduated) had impressed on him the great need for a Union for University men students. At once I replied that we would get the organ from another source, and shortly it was built by Casavants, the finest organ then in the city, at a cost of $19,000 from funds accumulated out of the fees for University examinations in music. Soon after this, through Mr Chester Massey, the Governors

received an offer from the Massey Estate to erect a building for the activities, apart from the athletic and the distinctly academic, of the men students of the whole University, to contain, along with other space, a dining-hall and accommodation for the Y.M.C.A. Mr Massey stipulated that the site should be south of the athletic building, and that he should appoint his own architects, Messrs Sproatt and Rolph; he engaged to spend on the structure not less than $300,000. The Governors gladly accepted the offer. Before long, however, the architects realized that the existing athletic building must come down. Accordingly Mr Massey offered to include quarters for men's athletics in the Hart House (the name chosen because Mr Hart Massey, the father, had created the Massey Foundation from which the project was to be financed), and to give in return for the demolished building $100,000, which was to be set aside for providing accommodation, chiefly athletic, for women students. (The accumulations have not yet proved sufficient for the expanding demands.) Ground for the building was broken late in 1911, and the architects seem to have been given almost *carte blanche* as to expense. Though Mr Vincent Massey had gone to Oxford, he gave the project meticulous care and introduced many of its most distinctive features. Altered and re-altered to suit the genius of the architects and the taste of the benefactors, Hart House became one of the most unique academic structures on the continent, and its fame has gone far and wide. The final cost I have never been told, but at a guess I should say that it was at least five times the original offer. The objects of the gift were well set forth by Mr Vincent Massey in the Founders' Prayer carved in stone at the east end of the main corridor. The unfinished structure was used for a variety of purposes in war-time, and it was formally opened by the Duke of Devonshire, then Governor-General of Canada, on Armistice Day, 1919.

The other outstanding benefactor of the original group was Mr E. C. Whitney, devoted brother of Sir James Whitney and a friend of Dr A. H. U. Colquhoun, who was always wisely interested in the University. He lived in Ottawa and was so crippled by rheumatism that he rarely attended meetings of the Board of Governors. His first gift was $50,000 for one of the three residences for men erected on Hoskin Avenue through the efforts of Mr W. T. White (afterwards Sir Thomas) and other gentlemen. These

residences were placed under the direct supervision of the President and were to be conducted on the principle of self-government, but advisers from the staff were appointed to live in each house: the first of whom were the late Professor E. J. Kylie, Professor V. E. Henderson and Dr T. H. Hogg, now head of the Hydro-Electric System of Ontario. Years later by Mr Whitney's will a large legacy came to the University, and from part of it Whitney Hall, the beautiful residences for women of University College, have been built.

This is not the place to refer to the successors of these men, some of whom were eminent both as advisers and as benefactors. Such a body of men carried great weight with the public. Their gifts also, with those from non-Governors and from the Rockefeller and Carnegie Foundations, all of which during the twenty-five years of my presidency amounted to over $7,000,000, did much to strengthen the belief that the University was essential to the welfare of the people.

Here I will interject an episode concerning a gift, comparatively small in money value though of deep interest. One morning in the spring of 1911, an old lady, the widow of Kirkman Pearson Marfleet of Prophetstown, Illinois, called on me, and asked me in a somewhat diffident manner whether the University would accept a gift of $5,000 to commemorate the name of her husband. He had been a lawyer in that small town, and with his wife had spent several summers in Toronto. While here he had used the University Library, had experienced courtesies from its officials, and had been impressed with the University and touched by the kindness shown them in the city. Mrs Marfleet wished to know what could be done with the money to fulfil her desire. After much deliberation she accepted gladly the proposal that a lectureship bearing her husband's name should be created; the lectures to be delivered every three or four years by some outstanding American or Canadian on some phase of the public life of one or the other country. The series was opened by ex-President Taft, and his successors have been notable men.

The regular meetings of the Board of Governors were held fortnightly, and as a rule they lasted for two hours. There was no executive committee, preparation for the meetings being made by the finance and property committees. Dr F. A. Mouré was the very efficient secretary of the Board and its committees, and

the guardian, never to be cajoled, of authorized expenditures. In the earlier years, the Board had to deal with many new problems arising out of the constitution: legal interpretations, matters of practice and policy in regard to the Colleges, Faculties, hospitals, the admission or recognition of additional teaching departments, new Faculties or external institutions. In fact the Governors soon discovered that there was no part of the University which they could afford to neglect: neither the Senate nor even the Caput. As the estimates rose rapidly, and especially when a large expenditure which might involve permanent increases was resolved upon, the Governors, by deputation, had conferences with the provincial Cabinet. These were almost always such as to show that the Board had the confidence of the government. But they received an unpleasant shock towards the end of this period, when, without previous suggestion, legislation was passed limiting to $500,000 annually the amount to be assigned them without special vote, instead of the statutory amount equal to half the succession duties based on those of the previous three years.

The President is a member of the Board and of the Senate and Faculties. He is the medium of communication between all these. It was commonly supposed that the President's powers made him an autocrat. But a strong Board will deflate undue assumption. His most vital function is the maintenance of the quality of the staff. No appointment to the University or University College teaching staff can be made except on his nomination, and no dismissal without his consent. At the conference of the Universities of the Empire held in Oxford in 1921, the Vice-Chancellor of Liverpool, who should have been surer of his facts, said that he had been informed that the Legislature of a Canadian province required that the staff of its state university should be confined almost altogether to its own graduates. I replied that, as far as Toronto was concerned, I had for the previous fourteen years nominated every appointment, and that the government had never made any suggestions to me as to personnel. If there were weaknesses in the teaching staff I was, in the final issue, responsible. The fact that no member of the teaching staff can be removed without the consent of the President, while giving protection to the individual, may at times bring on the President much criticism. The other duties of the President cannot be strictly defined. Standards of education from matriculation up in

all the Faculties and departments must be considered by him both in private consultation and in Faculty Councils, along with new proposals for educational development of all sorts; departmental additions as they involve expenditures must be discussed with the heads; personal problems of members of the staff are to be sympathetically dealt with; oversight must be had of student activities; often individual undergraduates or graduates ask for interviews; visitors are to be received, most of whom, with enquiries as to the working of the University, some distinguished persons others casual, I found interesting to meet, but occasionally thieves of time.

The rapid growth of attendance at the University called for the addition of large numbers of teachers. Many of these were recent graduates in junior positions. Within fixed grades there were statutory increases of salary, the scale of which was revised at somewhat lengthy intervals. A few lecturers came from the British universities for the lower places, while for professorships men of reputation were brought from time to time. The infusion of brain power and character from outside introduces new ideas and methods, and stimulates the staff to resist the stagnation which follows on inbreeding. Who can estimate the value to the University in older days of Ramsay Wright and Maurice Hutton? Or later, of T. G. Brodie, J. B. Leathes, B. P. Watson, J. J. R. Macleod in Medicine, and of R. M. MacIver and C. R. Fay in Arts, to say nothing of not a few now on the staff, or of others who have returned to prominent positions in Britain or the United States? The quality of the Toronto teaching body has been attested through all these years by the recurring invitations made every season to one or more of its number to positions of eminence or emolument in Britain or the United States, and these not infrequently our own graduates. Happily for the University, those invited often elect to remain in Toronto.

The Senate consisted of the full professors in the non-collegiate departments of the Faculty of Arts, of elected representatives from the teaching staffs of the Colleges and the other Faculties, of graduates of the Colleges, faculties and other departments, of representatives of the Federated Arts and Theological Colleges, University departments other than Faculties, and affiliated and associated institutions and of the high schools. Non-academic members of the Senate found satisfaction in being thus connected with the University, though the quadrennial elections were often given but

languid attention. Of this large and variegated body the President was chairman, and James Brebner, the Registrar, was secretary. Secretary of the Faculty of Arts as well, he was in his office from morn till dewy eve, often into the night, carrying willingly too heavy a load; with a memory tenacious of generations of students and of statutes and decisions, he was an indispensable adviser and a faithful confidant. The new constitution had reduced the powers of the Senate and increased those of the Faculties. But the Senate remained the supreme academic court, in some sort a House of Lords for the Faculties which were the really initiating and deciding bodies. It finally approved the standards for matriculation throughout the province, and the curricula after each had been passed by its own Faculty. It recommended fees for the consideration of the Governors, appointed all examiners, passed on their results and, through the Chancellor, conferred all degrees. It dealt with extra-faculty departments through its own committees and created new Faculties, teaching bodies and affiliations. The interest of the Governors in the Senate, the statutes of which they had always to ratify, was due to the financial outlay often involved in providing for new curricula or teaching bodies.

The vital academic work was done by the Faculties, their committees and the departments. The Faculties consisted of all members of the teaching staff holding permanent positions, from lecturer (or associate in Medicine) up. Here, each individual expressed his own mind, and there was constant debate. Rarely were opinions pronounced by departments as such, never by Colleges.[2] Year after year the Faculties seemed to be threshing old straw over again, but looking back it is evident that real progress was made in the improvement of academic standards as well as in the education of the staff. The President was chairman of the Faculty of Arts because it contained representatives of the Federated Colleges; the Dean of Arts was vice-chairman; and over the other Faculties each Dean presided. The departments stood in an independent position, neither the personnel nor the teaching being under the supervision of the Faculty. Each head conferred with the President as to his budget and promotions, as well as new appointments. Development came through the recognition that science or learning had so advanced that a division of subjects or additions were advisable.

[2]University Federation has been dealt with by me in the *Transactions* of the Royal Society of Canada, 1940.

The head of each department as a rule first brought the matter to the attention of the President, but he took account of the opinions of all members of its staff who might wish to express them, as wisdom is not confined to one person however exalted, and those of related departments. After a department had resolved to extend its subject for teaching, it sought to have the addition incorporated by the Faculty in either old or new graduating courses. Proposals for the creation of a new department were given mature consideration by the President with those who were most concerned, and were laid by him before the Faculty for discussion as to its adoption as a teaching-course, and before the Governors for their sanction. All teaching-courses were finally ratified by the Senate. Thus the democratic spirit of self-determination, combined with consultation and freedom of expression, pervaded the University on its academic side.

Second to no other department of the University in academic importance is the Library. The Librarian is under the direction of the Senate and is a member of the Faculty Councils and the University College Council. In choosing books he deals with the heads of departments, with the result that the quality and number of books in the several departments differ as the interest of the head is eager or casual. But the Librarian keeps an eye on each and supplements obvious defects, while he also builds up the general library with books common to, or outside of, all departments. He also sees that facilities are provided for individual work and research. The extent of all this depends upon the grants which he can secure from the Governors through the President, which always fall short of his requests, for the flood of books which should flow without stoppage into a university library is unceasing; but with it mounts the demand for space in stacks for housing them, for reading-rooms and for individual research. For many years Mr H. H. Langton was the Librarian, and with the discrimination of an accomplished scholar, he built up, to the limit of his narrow resources, a well-chosen selection of books suited especially to the Toronto courses. The best editions of authors in all civilized languages had to be acquired; history was a rapidly developing modern subject; scientific treatises got out of date and new discoveries created new ones; economics and the social sciences arose with the abundance of a rapid spring. All these books and pamphlets by the thousand had to be catalogued for easy reference,

and so placed as to facilitate their use by departments, seminars and individuals. Which of them were to be kept for ready use? which in reserve? The problem of space is a recurrent one which probably will have no permanent solution. The core of the present building was erected after the fire at University College in 1890. By 1907, its expansion was one of the most urgent demands. Taking advantage of the ravine, a new stack was added on the east; and administration quarters were placed at the back from the stack to the new wing on the south which contained a professors' reading-room with current periodicals. This reconstruction served a very good purpose until the first World War, but ever since, in spite of internal improvements and ingenious economies, the demand for more and better space and accommodation has been continuous.

The erection and equipment of new laboratories are not undertaken without the recommendation of the President to the property committee of the Board, but he comes to a decision after careful consideration with the Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds. The new office of Superintendent was created, and the first incumbent installed, at the same time that I was appointed. Mr Graham Campbell had the heavy task of inaugurating it, and he steered his way successfully through an uncharted channel studded with difficulties. Later, he was happily assisted by Mr A. D. LePan, accessible, clear in judgment, impartial. Though the Superintendent was not under the direction of the President, a close understanding between the two was essential, and together they had to ponder on what was involved in the erection of a new building, as to location, its drain on heating, and the cost of upkeep as well as the initial outlay. By experience the Superintendent became able to form a good idea as to the practice of each head of a laboratory both in his estimates for, and in his use of, equipment, supplies and renewals. This non-teaching side of the University was given unremitting care, and full value was received for the money spent.

A peculiar institution of the University, of which years ago a good deal was wont to be heard both in the *Varsity* and in evening newspapers, is the Caput. Its name seems to have been originally derived from Cambridge, though perhaps it came here through Dublin, but its functions in Toronto were self-determined. It consists of the President, the Principal of University College, the

heads of the Federated Colleges and the Deans of the Faculties. Its main function has been to deal with supreme matters of discipline which cannot be held to lie within the jurisdiction of one College or Faculty. At first, it gave patient attention to the initiations which by long custom were held at the opening of the fall term, and to the attendant outbreaks at elections for undergraduate societies in the disappearing winter months. The occasional excesses, which stirred the public because they got headlines in the evening papers, roused impetuous people to demand measures which would have worsened the situation. Now and then even a Governor would ask why the Board should not step in as the Caput was so inert. But by long experience the Caput acquired a reasonably good technique. Its members knew that healthy discipline is a matter of control through personal influence, and the Caput sought, not unsuccessfully, to create student sentiment for propriety through a Students' Administrative Council. As democracies win their freedom from age to age, each generation of undergraduates has to learn to be worthy of its academic privileges, though a constantly improving tradition helps them to walk in better paths.

THE DRAMA OF THE *AGAMEMNON*

E. T. Owen

IN reading a play of Aeschylus we should start with the assumption that the poet really knew his business, and therefore be ready to acknowledge that, where his work runs counter to our own conceptions of how a drama should be constructed, it may not be because he did not understand the principles of his art (as has actually been stated[1] and is often implied), but because he did and we do not. An examination of the art of Aeschylus does not consist in discovering to what extent his plays could be made tolerable for a modern audience, but how they fitted into the environment for which they were composed, i.e., environment in the widest sense of the artistic expectations of his own audience.

Drama, as we understand it, is the telling of a story solely through the words and acts of the persons in it. Judged by that standard, the *Agamemnon* moves very sluggishly. The first half of it is clogged with long choral odes that occupy most of the space and, so far as they deal with aspects of the story, present them in what seems to us an entirely undramatic way. For a group of persons who simultaneously think and utter the same things cannot be regarded as in any real sense persons of the story. A council of elders they may be called; but that character only emphasizes their unreality, for it is not the function of a council to sing anthems in public places. Not that this incongruity in itself would necessarily cause us difficulty; we are used to choruses on the stage; it is a convention we readily accept if the chorus will only play the game as we understand it and not get into the way of the drama. Their obvious role is to fill pauses in the action with music and reflection, to divide the play into acts—to serve, in short, as a glorified, though inadequate curtain.

A glance at the *Agamemnon* shows that this explanation will not suffice here. The odes are too long, and too much crowded together, to be intended or accepted as asides or stop-gaps. Think of them as such, and the structure becomes absurd. Of the first eight hundred lines nearly six hundred are sung by the chorus; that is, for almost half the play (according to this interpretation) the curtain is down most of the time and the audience

[1]Patin, *Eschyle*, 32.

waiting; and thereafter it falls but once. Obviously we must revise our notions of what the odes are for. Here is a drama in which choral singing is expected to engage our full attention, in which episodes and odes are meant to contribute progressively to the growth of the dramatic effect.

The point is that this is not a drama with a chorus, it is a dramatized choric song, and its action is conceived and carried through on that understanding. For there was no other. This was the only kind of drama that the Athenian audience knew about; they were not waiting and hoping for our sort to develop. And for us, too, the *Agamemnon*, just as it is, is effective enough to deserve something more of us than that we should judge it artistically as a magnificent drama which had not quite found its proper form, than that we should try to squeeze it into a mould in which it does not fit. Aeschylus was composing drama in a different medium, and consequently aimed at getting his effects by different means.

We find it hard to shake off the notion that the chorus in Greek tragedy was purely a stage convention, as it is, for example, in modern opera, that it had no *raison d'être* except in a drama. But that is not so; the tragic chorus corresponds, rather, to a church choir; tragedy was one of the things given to the Athenian choir to perform, and it took its character and technique from this association. Wherever the imaginary situation of the piece was laid, the action was always seen as taking place also in an *orchestra* (i.e., dancing-floor) where a chorus and nothing but a chorus properly belonged. That is why an oratorio is, in some ways, a closer modern parallel than the Shakespearean type of drama with which we instinctively compare it, or even than opera. In both Aeschylean tragedy and oratorio the chorus is the instrument that has formed and chiefly controls the technique; they are both choric performances, presenting a sacred, or at least venerated, legend, with a religious intention and in a religious environment. The most obvious difference is that in the oratorio there is no spectacle. All that the eye has to engage it are the motionless rows of singers, the orchestra and the active figure of the conductor; and these are nothing but the machinery of the instrument: it is a prolonged peep behind the scenes. For the only reason they are placed in full view is that there may be no obstruction to our hearing them. There is no artistic significance in the position of the soloists or

the chorus, no significance in anything that can be seen. All that which might have been presented by spectacle has passed into the music. The drama takes place in the music; the *dramatis personae* move and act only in music, the actors who portray them are still. In the Greek choral art, on the other hand, spectacle was by origin an integral part of the artistic scheme; it was the primary function of a Greek chorus to dance, to enact their song. That is, the Greek music was in part rendered by movement and visible action, and therefore the extension of the spectacle to include the visible presentation of the persons of the story and their actions did not in itself involve any change in the character of the art; the dramatic scenes were developments within the original structure, and had their place and purpose in relation to that structure. The artistic integrity of Aeschylean tragedy is as complete as that of the oratorio: the drama is continuous and is of the same kind throughout.

The story of the *Agamemnon* is the story of the murder of King Agamemnon by his wife Clytaemnestra, on his return from Troy. The two sons of Atreus, Agamemnon and Menelaus, joint Kings of Argos, had married two sisters, Clytaemnestra and Helen. Paris, son of Priam, King of Troy, abducted Helen. In revenge for this wrong, and to recover Helen, a great armament was gathered in Greece under the command of Agamemnon. Before they left Greece, Agamemnon had consented to the sacrifice of his own daughter, Iphigeneia, to placate the anger of Artemis, who, according to the seer Calchas, was responsible for the contrary winds that were holding up the fleet. Agamemnon was away at Troy for ten years. Meanwhile Clytaemnestra, nursing her grief and wrath for the slaying of her child, was approached by an exiled cousin of Agamemnon's, Aegisthus, whose father had suffered great wrong at the hands of Atreus, Agamemnon's father; and together these two, Clytaemnestra and Aegisthus, prepared for their double revenge. It is at this point that the action of the play opens.

This action begins at once and continues unbroken. The three great choral odes are part of it; each is put in just where it is, and as it is, because just there and just so it contributes to the progress and deepening of the dramatic tension. The poet aims at making us feel the full significance of the return of Agamemnon; he begins with the announcement that Agamemnon is coming home, and then proceeds to weave round that fact its emotional values.

On the battlements of the royal castle in Argos stands a watchman, waiting in hope and fear for the beacon-light which he feels is hiding behind the blackness of the night. The very scene strikes the key-note, and the watchman's mood establishes and typifies the mood of the audience. For, through his half-humorous grumbling talk, and checking his rejoicings when the longed-for signal comes, there passes and repasses the shadow of an unspoken thought that chills him with a vague uneasiness. It is, in fact, the shadow of our own thought, of our knowledge that Agamemnon is coming home to die. Five hundred lines later the actual situation has not advanced one step: we are still at the same point in the story. But the emotional advance in these five hundred lines is immense. All that a consideration of the fact which the beacon's flash has announced suggests to the reflective mind in the light of past events, and in the shadow, too, of coming events, has been gathered together and explored in the choral odes. Through the memories it awakens, the perplexities to which reflection upon it gives rise, the sense of impending and inescapable evil grows deeper and clearer. Our knowledge of the outcome of the story is thus used by the poet to create the illusion that we are watching the mysterious forces of destiny shaping the career of Agamemnon to an inevitable end; step by step his doom moves closer to us.

The watchman ends his soliloquy—for a soliloquy it is, not, like so many prologues, an explanatory speech frankly addressed to the audience—with the words: "Heaven grant that my master come safe home and that I grasp his friendly hand in mine. About the rest I am silent . . . ; the house itself, could it find a voice, might tell a plain tale enough." And on that expectant note the chorus enter and, as they sing, we become aware that the house has found a voice, that the tale it could tell is being told as all the evils which the house has known begin to collect before us through their words, to condemn Agamemnon and watch him die. As Argives the chorus have not heard the watchman's hints of evil, but the audience have, and would be quick to catch the continuance of the foreboding note in their opening words. Their song at once picks up, sustains and develops the feeling of dread set going by the words of the watchman; the drama moves straight ahead.

But here we moderns must make an effort to realize that the chorus come naturally into the picture, and have *as chorus* an

active role to play. They cannot just speak for the poet and reproduce directly the comments which his knowledge and his purpose suggest to him. They must function in the dramatic scene as a chorus, and a chorus of Argives contemporary with the events. A choric song was a religious act, and therefore was supposed to affect the course of human affairs; for by such means men have always thought to reach out and touch the world of spirit and bring its power to bear directly upon their lives. Therefore what the chorus sing here would be taken by the Athenians as part of the action, as affecting in the appropriate way what happens in Argos. The point can be put thus: what the performance of the whole play, or rather the whole trilogy, was supposed, as a religious rite, to effect for Athens, that the choral odes within the play were understood as doing, or at least aiming to do, for Argos. The dramatic assumption, then, is that the fate of Agamemnon is partly dependent upon what the chorus sing, and therefore, since the outcome is in fact known, what the spectators are here watching is the chorus unintentionally helping to weave his doom round him. For destiny (i.e., the poet) ever shapes their potent utterance to a sense unmeant by them. In effect, to the ears of the audience, knowing what they do, the chorus seem to be trying to keep something *unsaid*, and their words are constantly betraying them.

They march into the *orchestra* proclaiming with good heart the righteousness of the cause that sent the sons of Atreus to Troy, but the audience, watching for just such effects, and put on the alert by the watchman, would catch the undercurrent of menace that steals into their speech, would note how the words they use recoil upon the head of Agamemnon and by implication condemn him in the name of the same righteousness to a like fate with that which they so confidently foresee for Paris. Even the image in which they picture the wrath and grief of the Atreidae (a mere poetic decoration) mocks their intention: "Like eagles that, bereft of their young, sail round and round the empty nest, in desolate grief that it needs no more their tending." For who, knowing the story, can fail to think of Iphigeneia and the fierce wrath of Clytaemnestra? And so their turning of the simile into a sort of allegory in which they find assurance of divine vengeance upon the transgressor, is, in their mouths, unknown to them, a direct blow at the life of Agamemnon. The thing is happening; they are

not just telling us about these past facts; the event is now and here being shaped by the words in which they choose (or rather, are compelled) to tell about them. And, as in consequence, they seem to lose grasp of their song; they speak of the war—this war in vindication of eternal justice—as fought about "an oft-won woman," they come to the point of the confident declaration they intended at the beginning, and find they have nothing to say. The certain triumph of the avenger, which they were leading up to affirm, dwindles to this: "And now the matter still is where it is; as fate appoints the end, the end will be." The heart has been taken out of them, and like the watchman they become the prey of vague misgivings. It is this depressed mood that the poet makes the occasion for explaining their place in the dramatic picture as apart from their choral role. They are old and feeble men of Argos, and feel now acutely their helplessness and futility. It is effective too that the loyalty of Argos to Agamemnon should be represented thus; it helps to strengthen the impression of a failing cause. But the chief thing is the gloom that has come over the song, and the close of this anapaestic prelude to the ode proper explicitly calls attention to the ill-omened tone that has crept into it. Then the Elders remember, as it were, their position and responsibilities as a chorus, and deliberately set themselves to redress the balance in Agamemnon's favour. But their choice of a propitious topic for their choric song—the favorable omen that greeted the Kings as they were setting forth—proves most unfortunate. It leads them through Calchas' interpretation of the omen—straight to the sacrifice of Iphigeneia. Thus the chorus find themselves once more overborne by the sinister influence against which they are striving. "En retraçant ces affreux souvenirs," says Croiset, "le chant des vieillards est devenu peu à peu une sorte de lamentation."[2] That is the point, and as such their song does not only bring to this place and time the condemnatory facts (for our information), make the dramatic point that even Agamemnon's friends condemn his action, but itself helps to bring about his fall.

The ode is, in this way, indeed a dramatic utterance, but the dramatic utterance of a chorus. So too its contribution to the poet's interpretation of the religious significance of the story is made dramatically. The chorus do not know what the poet thinks, nor what he designs to make the story illustrate. But

[2]Croiset, *Eschyle*, 181.

they do know that they are a chorus and that therefore it is their duty to discover the purpose of heaven discernible in the events and to turn their reading of it to advantage. Here they are represented as puzzled, baffled by a sense of inexplicable purposes at work in the matter of Iphigeneia's sacrifice, and they fling forth the name Zeus, in a blind and desperate attempt to retrieve the situation their song has created.

Their religious comment is thus not just comment. Aeschylus' aim was always to place his story in its full setting, to let us see it not just as a human action but as part and parcel of a divine action. This he does by adapting the real function of a chorus. Since it is their proper business to bring the spiritual world into touch with the material world, we see, as they sing, that world gradually taking shape, and transforming and enlarging the bearing of the human events. Our vision is limited to and keeps pace with theirs, and so the spectacle is dramatically unrolled. Here they ponder so much of the story as they know at this point, seeking to discover the "meaning" of it, what it portends; and to lighten their darkness, they endeavour to invoke spiritual support and comfort. And the result is that they peer into a greater gulf of darkness in which huge shapes move dimly and incomprehensibly; everything is mysterious and inchoate; it would be chaotic except for the hint, inspired by faith rather than by perception, of

> a dark
> Inscrutable workmanship that reconciles
> Discordant elements.

Clytaemnestra now enters and announces to the Elders the capture of Troy. This is no news to the audience: the scene adds nothing to the progress of the story. But all the same it is vital in the action, not because the Elders and the audience have to be informed about the system of beacons and their curiosity satisfied as to how it worked, but because what is said in the scene brings Agamemnon's doom nearer. It is the same kind of action as in the odes; all these explanations of happenings off-stage or in the past, in odes and episodes alike, are the piling up of the clouds of the approaching storm, the mustering of all the evil things that menace the prosperity and the life of Agamemnon, and the recitation of them is not a mere convenience to remind us what these evils are, not just exposition preparatory to the drama, but the act of recounting them is a step in the drama. Every such utterance

is an incident in Agamemnon's progress towards destruction, a movement forward to the catastrophe. We must put away from us all notions derived from realistic drama. Aeschylus was not even trying to create the illusion that we are seeing what really occurred in Argos on this occasion. He is giving an interpretation of the events, and the interpretation must be understood in terms of the artistic medium. Just as, if the story of Agamemnon's death were presented by means of music, it would strike us first and all the time as music, and we should receive and understand it on those terms, so the Athenian spectator would be receiving this artistically for what it is, would not be hearing it as a story imperfectly rendered because of the cramping effect of the medium, but would be hearing just what that medium, in virtue of its characteristics, had to reveal about it. He would have his eye not on the events of the story as such, but on the artistic events, and would evaluate these not as more or less imperfect imitations of life, but in the light of their place and purpose within the artistic pattern.

Therefore, when Clytaemnestra enters, the Athenian spectator is looking to see her do something towards carrying forward the action the chorus have begun, and would take her words on the same plane of interest. This is Clytaemnestra speaking, yes; but she is speaking within the bounds of a choral performance, and in its language, and with a view to its purposes. Her speeches represent her own purpose and her own character certainly, but represent them in the idiom of the art. When she steps into the *orchestra*, her evil design against Agamemnon manifests itself in a way appropriate to the place. She takes advantage of her position in that magic circle to strike him deadly blows by her words. In announcing the good news she deliberately turns the omen against Agamemnon. She describes the beacon-light that carried the news of Troy's destruction in such terms that we recognize it as figuring the vengeance of Zeus, which struck down guilty Troy, now on its way over the sea to strike the palace of Agamemnon. She imagines the scene that is taking place in Troy even as she speaks, carefully emphasizing at each point the aspects that make for the peril of the conquerors, and closing with the words: "If they are showing due reverence to the city's gods and their holy places" (which the audience knew they were not doing), "then they may not have spoiled only to be spoiled in turn. But too soon, perhaps, lust may

seize upon the army to desecrate things inviolable; for safe passage home they have still to win, the long stretch back have yet to run. And if, escaped clear of this danger, they should reach here, the woe of the dead might show itself awake"—a most "unlucky" form of words, and meant to be; and she quickly seeks to discount its seriousness by a light apology, "These are just a woman's thoughts I am telling you," which draws from the Elders the delightfully condescending reply, "Your woman's words have all the well-judged wisdom of a man."

Aeschylus has brought in Clytaemnestra here, because he wishes us to feel at this point the significance for Agamemnon of the capture of Troy: we see it, as it were, happen immediately after the sacrifice of Iphigeneia; we see it in the light of that incident and of the thoughts to which it has given rise. This is the way it now looks to us, a doubtful, dangerous triumph, linking dreadful past to dreadful future. And Clytaemnestra is chosen to voice these feelings because she is the embodiment of them: she comes to us, so to speak, straight from the sacrifice and brings with her the memory of "the waiting, ever-mindful wrath," which is indeed what darkens the thought of his triumph.

The Argive choir now deal chorally with the news, that is, they seek to read its religious significance and turn it to good account for the cause they have at heart. Their course here is easy and reassuring. They see their way now. The overthrow of Troy is a clear act of justice according to the scriptures. They quote their text and proceed to show how exactly it has been worked out in this instance. "There is no defence for the man who in the pride of wealth has spurned the altar of justice. Merciless Peitho drives him on; Ate's decree her horrid offspring executes. Then all remedy is vain; the evil is not hidden, but gleams out balefully. As with base metal, the rub and hammer of the touchstone reveal the black grain in him that leaves its mark in woe upon his city." Obscure to us no doubt, but to the Athenians the familiar parable of the fall of the mighty. Great power engenders *hybris* (insolence, arrogance); the man, so afflicted, becomes the victim of Infatuation (Ate), and the fair-seeming spirit Peitho (Persuasion) lures him to his doom. Here, at least, the superhuman action shows plain through the human, and with confidence they trace its course. They track to its source in crime the disaster that has befallen Troy, and in so doing become the unconscious ministers of Zeus,

proclaiming the inevitableness and the justice of the doom that is coming upon Agamemnon. The sorrow that the sin of Paris brought upon Menelaus and the royal house of Argos insensibly passes into a larger sorrow. In the desolation caused by the Trojan war the chorus vaguely see the hand of God stretched out not only against Paris and Troy but also against Agamemnon. Thus, in fact and dramatically, the course of their reflections prepares the way for the catastrophe: the resentment against Agamemnon caused by the unpopularity of the war helps to make plausible the successful issue of the conspiracy, and, at the same time, the realization of it (by the audience) intensifies the sense of impending calamity. And clearer grows the recognition of divine direction in the course of the events. In accounting for the conduct and the fate of Paris the explanation sanctified by tradition rises naturally to the lips of the chorus, and unexpectedly crystallizes their former vague searchings for a higher purpose working through and controlling these events. The divine action is assuming a definite outline. They catch a glimpse of the powers at work:

> *apparent dirae facies, inimicaque Troiae*
> *numina magna deum.*

But these dread faces still wear their masks of anonymity, besides being safely across the sea and turned against Troy. The chorus do not see (as the audience of course do) that their apologue is fatally appropriate to Agamemnon. It is as if that menace of evil which in the first ode seemed to be trying to formulate itself through their words had seized upon the moment of their rejoicing to get itself spoken; and so they are swept irresistibly, as by the current of their own thoughts, to an outspoken denunciation of Agamemnon and his specious triumph.

At the close of this ode a herald enters and announces that Agamemnon has landed and is now on his way to the city. It should be obvious from what I have said of the character of Aeschylean tragedy that there would be here no time-problem either for poet or audience. It is in this matter simply the technique of the undramatized choral hymn, in which the passage of time in the narrative of events is left to the imagination of the hearers. The continued presence of the chorus would not trouble the Athenian audience, who were not looking for an illusion of reality. They knew that the Athenian choir was merely singing the part of an

Argive choir. The passage of time was taken for granted, and is no more "unnatural" than it is in an oratorio.

The main dramatic interest of this scene lies in seeing the herald driven, against his strong determination, from his message of triumph to the relation of disaster. He knows that, in virtue of his sacred office, what he says and the way he says it are big with consequences good or evil, and in his opening words he bespeaks the favour of the gods and of the powerful dead. He points to the good omen of the sunlit faces of the sacred images before the palace, and heaps up the claims of Agamemnon on the admiration of his people. Then, to dispel the gloom that he feels gathering in the obscure hints of the Elders, he sets himself to describe the greatness of their success at Troy, only to find he is talking of nothing but their sufferings. And finally, under pressure of the questions of the Elders, comes the doleful tale of the destruction of the fleet, and the probable death of all save the remnant with Agamemnon himself. Once more joy has turned to sorrow. The evil influence has gained strength through the herald's good-omened coming: his glad tidings become news of further calamity.

The third ode marks the central point in the dramatic structure. After it is over, Agamemnon enters, and we reach the culmination of these events; the actors take command, our chief attention shifts from hearing to seeing, and so, as some would say, the drama begins. But it is in the transfiguring light of this ode that what happens is seen. Superficially the topic of the ode might be judged outside the main track of the play; and indeed to the chorus it is in the nature of a digression. By the herald's stories of destruction—the destruction of Troy and of the Greek fleet—their thoughts have been diverted from Agamemnon to the cause of all this ruin, Helen, and they dwell wonderingly upon her character and career. They have found, they think, the key-word to the whole ghastly tale, and on it they build up the fabric of their song. The word is the ominous name, Helena, the "Destroyer," and the ode is the name Helena writ large in its full import. Her career is, they discover, the translation into fact of the sinister meaning of a word. Words are coming alive, incarnating themselves in acts. And as they sing another name asserts itself, though it is not explicitly mentioned. The ode shapes itself as a restatement and elaboration of the Ate theme. The chorus see Helen no longer merely as the unfaithful wife of Menelaus, the unworthy cause of a great war.

She is Peitho in person, the high priestess of Ate, and as such Heaven's own instrument for the rectification of the moral balance of the universe, disturbed by a mortal's excess. Thus in this ode the human story is caught up into and identified with the lyric theme, and swells to the proportions of that theme's universal significance, and conversely the theme takes on tangible form and becomes a vital, terrible reality in the actual world. Symbol and fact here meet, and in their union we see that they have been all along but two aspects of the same thing. The chorus have unwittingly confirmed the literal truth of their former statement, and brought the superhuman action to the verge of visibility.

"In the choral odes," says Cornford,

> the action is lifted out of time and place on to the plane of the universal. Above and beyond the transient spectacle of a few suffering mortals, caught just there and then in the net of crime, loom up in majestic distance and awful outline the truths established, more unchangeably than the mountains, in the eternal counsels of Zeus. The pulse of momentary passion dies down; the clash and conflict of human wills sink and dwindle to the scale of a puppet-show; while the enduring song of Destiny unrolls the theme of blood-haunted Insolence lured by insistent Temptation into the toils of Doom. As though on a higher stage another company of actors concurrently plays out a more majestic and symbolic drama. On this invisible scene walk the figures of Hybris and Peitho, of Nemesis and Ate. The curtain lifts for a timeless moment on the spectacle of human life in an aspect known to the all-seeing eye of Zeus.[3]

And with the inward eye held to that stupendous spectacle, there is flashed upon the outward eye an actual scene, and this scene a projection upon the material stage of the great spiritual drama which has been unrolling before the mental vision.

A splendid pageant, crowding into the *orchestra*, draws the eye of the spectator. Everything is done to emphasize the passing from hearing to seeing. With chariots and horses, and, no doubt, throngs of attendants, amid the acclaims of the chorus, Agamemnon returns in triumph to his city. In a speech of arrogant self-glorification, boasting of the ruin he has wrought, he addresses the chorus. The palace doors open and, accompanied, too, by throngs of attendants, Clytaemnestra appears, and in lavish, fawning words bids her husband welcome. Then follows that strange scene, "which for spectacular writing has probably never been rivalled," as Verrall well puts it.

[3] F. M. Cornford, *Thucydides Mythistoricus*, 144.

The Queen closes her "long drawn out, smiling welcome" with these words:

> Thus, King, I greet thee home. No god need grudge
> This one day's triumph. Light thee, sweet my husband,
> From this high seat; yet set not on bare earth
> Thy foot, great King, the foot that trampled Troy!
> Ho, thralls, why tarry ye, whose task is set
> To carpet the King's way? Bring priceless crimson:
> Let all his path be red, and Justice guide him,
> Who saw his deeds, at last, unhoped for, home![4]

What a spectacle it must have been, as the blood-red carpets were unrolled for the treading of the King! And apart from the obvious symbolism of the path of blood, the significance of this act would be clear to the Athenians, for on such tapestries their gods walked on their festal days. Agamemnon shrinks from the thought of such a sacrilege with its presumptuous challenging of equality with gods. And then we see him cajoled and flattered into putting his scruples by. "Forced by Temptation," says Headlam,[5] "under foot he treads these beautiful and holy things, and, if this had been an opera of Wagner's, with a crash we should have heard the *Leit-motif* of Ate." But no accompanying music is needed to reveal the significance of the scene. The *leit-motif* is here, not in sound, but in sight. The scene itself is the symbol. The spectacle is the Ate theme. Its presence marks that the word has achieved its complete incarnation, places the human story within that greater action which is being played out beyond the eyes of the spectators, and which the chorus have been painfully and with growing apprehension evoking and revealing. Thus, far from "the conflict of human wills sinking and dwindling to the scale of a puppet-show," as Cornford said, the human drama emerges, raised and magnified to the scale of that symbolic drama. It is the invisible scene that becomes visible. The curtain that the choral odes have been lifting is up for good, and we are now able to see this transient spectacle of suffering mortals in its full setting and with its larger implications revealed.

In this study of the *Agamemnon* I am concerned solely with the kind of action which underlines its structure, not with the thought or meaning of the play; that is to be sought in its relation to the whole trilogy of which it is part. The resemblance to the

[4]Professor Gilbert Murray's translation in *Ancient Greek Literature*.
[5]Walter Headlam in *Cambridge Praelections, 1906*, 132.

methods of music is obvious, and this analogy, if kept in mind, helps us, even in reading, to feel, in some degree, the dramatic interest developing through the long choral preparation for Agamemnon's entrance. In his *History of Aesthetic* Bosanquet quotes the following note on Brahms' *Requiem* to illustrate the peculiar power of musical expression:

> In the middle of the piece the name of God is introduced for the first and almost the last time in the words, "The souls of the righteous are in God's hand." That name is translated into music by the pedal note, which is held down from beginning to end of the fugue to which these words are set. The pedal note persists, makes its presence felt throughout, is all enduring, all pervading; the fugue starts from it, and finally, although many different and apparently incompatible harmonies are found in the course of the fugue, these harmonies are all finally resolved into the initial harmony, of which the pedal note is at once the characteristic and the epitome. Everything proceeds from it and returns to it; it alone is permanent, and steadily, continuously, irresistibly self-asserting. Neither poetry nor painting nor architecture can express mysteries such as these with such searching force and directness.

And yet it is a like effect that Aeschylus achieves here, and mainly by a manipulation of mere words. His purpose is similar, and his method is similar. He wishes to keep another thought actively present in the minds of his hearers as they follow the successive phases of the story, and he does it by associating that thought with a familiar saying, which, once established, can be readily recalled to the memory by the merest suggestion, and so give to other scenes and other interests a reference that stretches far beyond them. The moral theme, which is in itself a commonplace, is a means, not an end; and the shaping of Agamemnon's story to exemplify it does not represent Aeschylus' final judgment on the matter. The vision attained here turns out to be incomplete and partial; "the truths established more unchangeably than the mountains" have yet to be discerned, have indeed yet to be shaped; we are watching the forces that, so to speak, threw up the mountains. The divine action, now that we can see it, is itself to move forward and develop; and its progress constitutes the drama of the *Oresteia*. With that topic I have dealt elsewhere.[6]

[6] "The Oresteia of Aeschylus" (UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO QUARTERLY, VIII, 1939, 440-51).

BACON ON PLATONISM

F. H. Anderson

I

THINKERS of the seventeenth century owe a primary debt to Martin Luther for their knowledge of Platonism. "Martin Luther," acknowledges Bacon, "in discourse of reason finding what a province he had undertaken against the Bishop of Rome and the . . . traditions of the Church, and finding his own solitude, being no ways aided by the opinions of his own time, was enforced to awake all antiquity, and to call former times to his succours to make a party against the present time; so that the ancient authors, both in divinity and in humanity, which had long time slept in libraries, began generally to be read and revolved." As a result, continues Bacon, learning among Reformers became characterized by "the adoration of ancient authors, the hate of the schoolmen, the exact study of languages," and an insistence upon the "efficacy of preaching"—this last, "because the great labour then was with the people." The concurring of these four causes, Bacon argues with some asperity, often made scholars "hunt more after words than matter, and more after the choiceness of the phrase . . . than after the weight of matter": with the consequence that learning in many instances became "delicate"—"rather towards copy than weight."[1]

However warranted this amplification of Bacon's may be, there is every evidence for the conclusion that Protestant scholars turned to the early Church Fathers for an authoritative statement of Christian doctrine. Patristic works were edited and re-edited, sometimes in a scholarly, and not seldom in a propagandist fashion, by both Reformers and their opponents within the Roman Church. In these writings Protestant theologians found the means of relating their own doctrine to the teaching of the early Church; and from them they garnered thoughts and idioms for a militant weapon in controversy against a scholasticism which, in Bacon's words, "had almost incorporated the contentious philosophy of Aristotle into the body of Christian religion."[2] For the Fathers,

[1] *Works* ed. Spedding, Ellis and Heath, VI, 118-20. All references are to this edition. [2] VI, 421.

both those who accepted and those who rejected the findings of reason, were, in their use of philosophy, mainly concerned with Platonic concepts and arguments; while the most renowned of them all, the rational theologian Augustine, was in his systematic thought recognized as a thorough-going Platonist.

Among Reformers there were many who accepted a Platonic theology—founded in large measure on the doctrines of Augustine—as a basis of dogma and creed. Others went to an opposite extreme and recognized no rational or other religious teaching save that given through immediate revelation in faith to the individual believer, and insisted on the absolute separation of theology, as something prophetic, from human philosophy, which they rejected as a sort of pagan wisdom, the work of carnal, natural man. Still other Reformers, like Bacon, took a middle position: they believed that man might properly philosophize, and through his philosophy might know as much of the goodness of God as is set forth in God's created works. They refused, however, to see in the human creature any natural faculty or faculties capable of discerning either the inner thoughts or the nature of God. They accordingly opposed the Platonic teaching which regarded Forms or Ideas as both the content of human knowledge and the object of Divine contemplation. And they taught that the knowledge of the Supreme Being and his saving ways is not attained by reason and sense, but is given through the Revelation contained within his written Word. Bacon, with many others, thus comes to separate a revealed theology from a valid philosophy discovered through the natural efficacy of human functions. The distinction which he makes here is neither original nor singular with him; and there seems to be no good reason to suspect in his case, as commentators are sometimes prone to do, that the prevailing motive is something akin to fear of the constituted ecclesiastical authorities.

Now if an undertaking of Luther's was to rally the ancient Fathers to refute the peripatetic theology of the Church, so does it become a task of Bacon's to recall ancient learning to remove Aristotle from his magistracy over the realm of the philosophy of nature. In his recalling the thought of the past Bacon knows he is not original; Luther has already done the same, and before Luther the authoritative Aristotle himself. For did not the Stagirite set forth in review the opinions of his predecessors, if, albeit, only to refute all the doctrines of antiquity, and with coinages of speech

to extinguish all the words of wisdom which men before him had uttered? Never, reflects Bacon, did Aristotle name an author but to destroy him, never did he instance a doctrine but to confute it: a strange philosopher Aristotle, who in Ottoman fashion thought himself unsafe unless he first put all his brothers to death.[3]

Aristotle, in his comparative statement of scientific doctrines, was impressive, and has prevailed: so much so that he has reduced men of learning to editors, copyists and discursive amplifiers, who after heroic labours produce a distinction unheard of within their master's logic! He has given to the world an "unfortunate succession of wits . . . whereby the patrimony of all knowledge goeth not on, husbanded or improved, but wasted and decayed. For knowledge is like a water that will never arise again higher than the level from which it fell; and therefore to go beyond Aristotle by the light of Aristotle is to think that a borrowed light can increase the original light from whom it is taken."[4] For centuries scholars have trusted no wit but Aristotle's, and have made knowledge the task for the life of this one man. They refuse to recognize that man as man—and not Aristotle alone—can see and think; and in their ignorance of the history of learning they remain unaware that both before and after the dissemination of their master's writings, even beyond the age of Cicero, there were other thinkers who were followed with high esteem.[5] Recall the case of Democritus, for example: the

> philosophy of Democritus respecting atoms, which, because it penetrated somewhat more sharply and deeply into nature and was further removed from common ideas, was treated as childish by the vulgar, and was, moreover, by the disputes of other philosophies, more adapted to their capacity, blown about and almost distinguished. And yet this man . . . was called Pentathlus from the variety of his knowledge, and by consent of all was esteemed the greatest physical philosopher, so that he obtained also the surname of Magus. Nor could either the battles and contests of Aristotle . . . or the majesty and solemnity of Plato so far prevail—the one by violence, the other by reverence—as to obliterate entirely this philosophy of Democritus . . . held in great honour with the wiser sort, and those who embraced more closely the more silent and arduous kinds of speculation. Certainly in the times of Roman learning that of Democritus was not only extant but well accepted; for Cicero mentions him everywhere in terms of the highest praise.[6]

The philosophy of Democritus is worthy of rescue not merely because "in most things it agrees with the authority of the earliest

[3]VI, 215-16, 425; VIII, 502; X, 349. [4]VI, 41. [5]VIII, 108. [6]X, 349.

ages,"[7] but because it has "some savour of the nature of things, and experience, and bodies; whereas in the physics of Aristotle you hear hardly anything but the words of logic, which in his metaphysics also, under a more imposing name, ... he has handled over again."[8] Its account of "the beginnings of things" as "*solid, void, and motion to the centre*" is sounder than the Aristotelian as "*matter, form, and shift*," or the Platonic in terms of "*the mind, motion, and matter.*" It has no place for logical abstractions, but deals with the parts of nature, with matter, its configurations and changes of configuration, with simple action and law of action—if at times in its concern with minute atoms it neglects the larger structures of nature.[9] And, not less important, it does not depend on something akin to human motives, in a doctrine of final causes, for an explanation of physical motion. The continued "handling of final causes in physics," says Bacon,

> has driven away and overthrown the diligent inquiry of physical causes, and made men to stay upon these specious and shadowy causes, without actively pressing the inquiry of those which are really and truly physical; to the great arrest and prejudice of science . . . . For to introduce such causes as these, . . . "that the clouds are formed above for watering the earth," or "that the thickness and solidity of the earth is for the station and mansion of living creatures," and the like, . . . in Physic is impertinent. . . . And therefore the natural philosophy of Democritus and others, who removed God and Mind from the structure of things . . . and assigned the causes of particular things to the necessity of matter, without any intermixture of final causes, seems . . . to have been, as regards physical causes, much more solid and to have penetrated further into nature than that of Aristotle and Plato.[10]

That credit may be given, then, to the doctrines of wise men like Democritus, that knowledge may be cultivated, that human capacity for discovery may be illumined, that the human race may be delivered from the bondage of Aristotelianism, a history of learning becomes imperative: without it, says Bacon, "the history of the world seems . . . as the statue of Polyphemus without the eye; that very feature being left out which most marks the spirit and life." This history should not, of course, be primarily a condemnation in the Aristotelian manner by a thinker, or a sect, of those thinkers and sects which have gone before, but "a just story of learning, containing the antiquities and originals of knowledge, and their sects; their inventions, their traditions; their diverse administrations and managings; their flourishings, their oppositions,

[7]X, 350. [8]VIII, 92. [9]VIII, 83, 85, 510. [10]VIII, 508.

decays, depressions, oblivions, removes; with the causes and occasions of them, and all other events concerning learning." It should not, moreover, be a mere collection of titles, packed and tied together after the manner of Plutarch, but rather a succession of philosophies, set forth as consistent unities within which the several doctrines support and illumine one another. And it can in the beginning, Bacon suggests, be gathered out of the lives of the ancient philosophers, the *placita* of Plutarch, the citations of Plato, the confutations of Aristotle, and the references to different thinkers in the works of such writers as Lactantius, Philo and Philostratus.[11]

This history of learning, like many of its author's schemes, is never brought to completion. Pieces of it, written as the occasions of exposition required, are scattered throughout his works. Much of it is illustrative, and based on secondary sources. Those portions particularly which deal with Aristotle have been much discussed. In any case it is not our intention here to assemble its many parts; and in the space which remains we shall be content to notice its chief references to Plato, and mainly because these constitute a subject which has been overlooked to a singular degree by commentators upon the Baconian writings.

II

Bacon's praise of Democritus is wholesale and usually uncritical; and in his positive doctrine he makes but little use of Democritus' atomic theory, which as a philosophy he deems deficient.[1] His treatment of Platonism is minute and consistently critical, this largely because many of Plato's doctrines, carefully interpreted or modified, are incorporated into his own thinking. His references to Plato and his School fall mainly within three groups: (i) cases where Plato is instanced, (ii) oppositions to Platonic doctrine, and (iii) citations of Platonic teachings in the development of positive theory.

As examples of the first: Bacon instances the comparison by Plato of one's native country to a parent;[2] and his observation, as in the *Phaedrus*, "that virtue, if she could be seen, would move great love and affection."[3] And he credits Plato with the origination of that "most beautiful emblem," of "exquisite subtlety," the Idols of the Cave, which "arise from each man's peculiar nature

[11]VI, 182-3; VIII, 418-20, 503.
[1]VIII, 86; X, 292. [2]VI, 111. [3]IX, 132.

both of mind and body; and also from education and custom, and the accidents which befall particular men."[4]

In criticism, we find him accusing Plato of injustice in placing rhetoric "among arts voluptary": Bacon sees no reason why rhetoric should not be used to make "unwholesome meats more palatable."[5] Plato's placing, as in the *Timaeus*, of the seat of the understanding in the brain, "animosity" in the heart, and sensuality in the liver, he treats with detachment: it "deserves," he says, "neither to be altogether despised nor to be eagerly revived."[6] But he rejects a further theory allegedly based by the School of Plato on another passage in the *Timaeus*, where Plato assigns mind, soul and life to the cosmos, namely that of "*spiritus mundi*, the spirit or soul of the world: by which," explains Bacon, "they did not intend God (for they did admit of a deity besides), but only the soul or essential form of the universe. This foundation being laid, . . . they did insinuate that no distance of place, nor want or indisposition of matter, could hinder magical operations; but that (for example) we might here in Europe have sense and feeling of that which was done in China, and likewise we might work any effect without and against matter . . . by the unity and harmony of nature."[7]

Bacon also accuses Plato and his School of bringing into philosophy the doctrine of "*Acatalepsia*—a denial of the capacity of the mind to apprehend truth." This, he recounts, was introduced by Plato and his early followers first in irony, jest and disdain of the Sophists' pretensions to knowledge. Later on, members of the New Academy made it a positive philosophical dogma, directed against arbitrary conclusions. Yet they had no intent to deny the validity of all knowledge, like Pyrrho and his followers, and were prepared to accept certain findings of science as probable. But it turned out that thinkers, having been instructed by them, and having begun to doubt, and having been provided with reasons for doubt, became content with mere disputation about the possibility of knowledge, and turned away from the more difficult course of the strict inquisition of nature.[8]

Bacon's severest criticism of Plato is reserved, however, for those occasions on which he treats of him in conjunction with Aristotle. These two philosophers he groups with the Sophists, on account of a common fondness for "talk." Because of their

[4]IX, 100. [5]IX, 132. [6]IX, 22. [7]V, 117. [8]VIII, 98, 107, 158.

shared zeal for building systems, he calls the two, degraders of knowledge; and because of the status which they in common assign to teleological causes in the explanation of natural things, he accuses them both of arresting the advance of science. Plato and Aristotle, he says, with the dignity and importance of founders of schools, accused the Sophists of peddling knowledge. Such criticism, he thinks, is irrelevant to the question of the validity of knowledge; and actually all concerned, both accusers and accused, were busy with turning knowledge into mere disputation, and dividing philosophers into wrangling sects, with corresponding heresies, which their respective founders hoped to perpetuate. And philosophy became, as a result, what Dionysius called the instruction of Plato, "the idle talk of old men to ignorant youths."[9] "Plato made over the world to thoughts; and Aristotle made over thoughts to words . . . , forsaking the stricter inquiry of truth." Discourse was used by both to supplant observation, and the building of grandiose systems out of theoretically consistent opinions was substituted for the statement of modest principles established through exact observation. The sets of logically coherent propositions which have come down from them through the ages as professed natural philosophy belong to discourse and discourse alone; hence they need not, and indeed cannot, be either proved or disproved through scientific observation: they accordingly "are rather to be condemned in the whole than confuted separately in the parts; for they are the opinions of those who wish to talk much, and know little."[10]

Plato used the thoughts of many predecessors, *dramatis personae* in his dialogues, to construct one philosophy; Aristotle impressed the thoughts of one philosopher upon many successors. Both made the breadth and inclusiveness of discourse the matter of primary concern. Either began with a few inquiries and reached conclusions which severally belong to relatively narrow parts of science. But neither remained content with such limitations; he would—like many an investigator since—build an all-inclusive structure on a few findings which apply properly to a corner of human knowledge. Plato, for example, distinguished between particulars which affect the human senses and Forms which are known by the intellect. And he would have these Forms "absolutely abstracted from matter," and given the *locus* of a divine realm:

[9]VIII, 102-3. [10]X, 352; cf. VI, 42.

"whence it came that he turned aside to theological speculations," and brought all his knowledge under a sort of natural theology. Aristotle, in turn, invented syllogistic logic, and then spun a philosophy out of it. Platonists like Proclus favoured mathematics —"which ought only to give definiteness to natural philosophy, not to generate or give it birth"—and reconstructed Platonism in terms of it. Later the Alchemists found the basis of a complete system in a few experiments. And even Gilbert, whose discoveries have been of incalculable use to science and humanity, could not refrain from building a whole philosophy of nature on the results of his observations of the loadstone![11]

In Plato's system the crowning notion is the Good or God—for many Platonists identify the two; in Aristotle's it is the Prime Mover, to which Aristotle sometimes adds God. This addendum brings nothing to Aristotle's system, however, because in effect he identifies God, the Prime Mover, and Nature: he can say indifferently, "Nature does nothing in vain" or "God and Nature do nothing in vain." Plato is therefore, argues Bacon, more consistent at least than Aristotle: Plato does allow God a function in his philosophy; whereas Aristotle, who explains movement through the agency of final causes, leaves out the "fountain of final causes, namely God," and rests his case on Nature. Be this as it may, both philosophers describe physical nature in theological terms; they explain natural motions through a supreme Final Cause, and read non-physical motives into the realm of matter to the arrest and prejudice of natural knowledge. Such teleological interpretation as theirs many, of course, regard as the only pious one: while actually it is far from a sign of depravity to expel final causes from a scientific description of nature's ways. For this, contends Bacon, does not "call in question, or derogate from, divine providence, but rather highly confirms and exalts it . . . ; so does the wisdom of God shine forth more admirably when nature intends one thing and Providence draws forth another, than if he had communicated to all natural figures and motions the characters and impressions of his providence."[12]

Builders of systems, reflects Bacon, seem never content to observe and record the motions of created nature; they will presume, like Adam, to a knowledge of the Creator's own motives, that sin of presumption by which man originally fell. "Man . . . , when he

[11]VI, 132; VIII, 132, 504-5. [12]VIII, 510-11.

was tempted before he fell, had offered unto him this suggestion, *that he should be like unto God.* But how? Not simply, but in this part, *knowing good and evil.*" "This approaching and intruding into God's secrets and mysteries was rewarded with a further removing and estranging from God's presence."[13]

So much, then, for the assault on Plato's system-building and his teleology: let us turn now to those views of Plato to which Bacon gives critical acceptance. These lie mainly within the problem of scientific knowledge; and here we shall find Bacon relying on Plato for a vindication and amplification of opinions respecting (*a*) the rewards of knowledge, (*b*) the data of knowledge, (*c*) the objects of knowledge, (*d*) the method of knowledge, and (*e*) the faculties of knowledge. Bacon, in announcing the personal rewards of non-Aristotelian scientific procedure, offers no hope of advancement in the Established Church, the universities or the professions; for the authorities in these are still under the scholastic spell, and look upon innovators as trouble-makers. Instead he offers his co-workers the promise given by Plato to disinterested men of science: the name Plato he does not mention here, but the source of his promise is unmistakable. The value of learning, Bacon argues, after Plato, may be assessed in terms of (i) pleasure, and (ii) permanence of achievement. "The pleasure and delight of knowledge and learning," he claims, "far surpasseth all other in nature." Human pleasures belong to the senses, honour and the intellect: those of sense and honour are transitory, unstable, deceptive; "*but it is a pleasure incomparable, for the mind of man to be settled, landed, and fortified in the certainty of truth.*" Man seeks pleasure, and more than pleasure he desires the permanence of "immortality or continuance." For this he begets, builds, thinks, writes and discovers, and leaves foundations and monuments. The observing man knows that the monuments of learning and discovery are durable beyond those "of power or of the hands." The verses of Homer remain while innumerable cities, temples and palaces have decayed. Even "philosophers which were least divine and most immersed in the senses and denied generally the immortality of the soul, yet came to this point, that whatsoever motions the spirit of man could act and perform without the organs of the body they thought might remain after death; which were only

[13]VI, 27-8.

those of the understanding, and not of the affection; so immortal and incorruptible a thing did knowledge seem unto them to be."[14]

The data of knowledge are, Bacon believes, to be sought largely in common things. And he assails a prevalent opinion, which has greatly hindered investigation, that it is dishonouring and degrading for men of learning to examine the natures of base and mechanical things "except they be such as may be thought secrets, rarities, and special subtleties." In pressing his attack he finds an ally in Plato, who noticed and condemned a similar opinion in his own age. Plato, he observes, portrays the character Socrates—"after his loose and wandering manner of inductions"—instancing as examples of beauty a fair woman, a fair horse, and a fair pot, well-glazed. The other character of the dialogue, the learned Hippias, takes offence at the mention of such a common thing as a pot, and is thereupon exposed to the effects of the Platonic irony.[15]

Our author's estimate of Plato's importance in the history of thought becomes clearer when as an announcer of a new theory of science he seeks the forerunner of this in the teachings of his predecessors. The two main factors in this theory are (*a*) Forms, the object of scientific observation, and (*b*) Induction, a new method of science with its use of negative instances, in opposition to the induction of Aristotle, which, according to Bacon, is restricted to positive cases. Both of these factors Bacon finds in the writings of Plato, whom he hails as "a man of sublime wit" who perceived "that Forms were the true object of knowledge"—even if he failed to bring his doctrine of Forms to a scientific fruition, for he treated Forms as abstract from matter and not as determinate within it.[16] The true induction, which proceeds by "proper rejections and exclusions" and reaches after the examination of negative instances a conclusion regarding affirmative examples, "has not yet been done or even attempted, save only by Plato, who does indeed employ this form of induction . . . for the purpose of discussing definitions and ideas." Yet Plato's induction, like his doctrine of Forms, fails because of its author's stress on the intellectual character of knowledge and his denial of status to sense and particulars respectively in knowledge and reality. It must be recognized, however, that Plato in practice gives the senses and

[14]VI, 167-9; *vide* Plato, *Symposium* 202b-206b; *Republic* 580d-587e.
[15]VI, 186; VIII, 414. [16]VIII, 504-5.

particulars more due than do the Aristotelians who assign them a principal place in their theory. For the followers of Aristotle have completely deserted natural history, and have come to rely "only upon the agitation of wit; whereas Plato giveth good example of inquiry by induction and view of particulars, though in . . . a wandering manner."[17]

Bacon's assessment of the respective roles played in the act of knowledge by reason and sense is not easily gauged; one fact, however, is sure, in attempting to combine these two in an epistemology Bacon leans heavily upon Plato. He begins with Plato's sharp distinction between the two faculties: the senses, he explains, are in contact with individual or particular things, while scientific knowledge "discards individuals; neither does it deal with the impressions immediately received from them, but with abstract notions derived from these impressions; in the composition and division whereof according to the law of nature and fact its business lies. And this is the office and work of reason." Nevertheless, in scientific observation the senses, like the intellect, must not be neglected: for adequate direction in science, "we must lead men to the particulars themselves" and also see "that a method of intellectual operation be introduced, altogether better and more certain" than that hitherto employed. "The senses deceive," and can give no access to the inner nature of things; while the intellect makes its own difficulties. Both faculties have their faults; neither of them may be ruled out of court. The true method of discovery must "not take away authority from the senses, but supply them with helps; . . . not slight the understanding, but govern it."[18]

Science cannot rest in particulars, and no science "flies from the senses and particulars to the most general axioms, and from these principles, the truth of which it takes for settled and immoveable, proceeds to judgment and . . . discovery." Where, then, between sense and reason do the truths of science lie? Bacon finds an answer in Plato, who undertook to combine by division and definition the indeterminate multiplicities of sensuous particulars with the more definite generalities of abstract thought, neither of which without the other, Plato saw, can be of any scientific consequence—because to admit as many propositions as there are particular cases is to render scientific statement futile; while to rest in a highly abstract principle, such as "Being is," is

[17]VI, 427; VIII, 138-9. [18]VIII, 17, 43, 75, 82-3, 158, 408.

to know and say nothing about the being which is asserted. The correct solution is, first, as "Plato more than once intimates, 'that particulars are infinite, and the higher generalities give no sufficient direction; that the pith therefore of all sciences, which makes the artsman differ from the inexpert, is in the middle propositions' "; and, secondly, that these middle propositions are discoverable only by him "*that can truly divide and define*, which cannot be but by true forms and differences."[19]

Knowledge consists in rational propositions: what, then, is the epistemological function of the senses? Bacon, after the Platonist Augustine, calls them "but reporters." And when he does so, he has already proceeded some distance on the Platonic way. In addressing his *Proficiency and Advancement of Learning* to his Sovereign, when he is not likely—his political status and ambition considered—to speak in light or careless vein, he has instanced "Plato's opinion, that all knowledge is but remembrance." The senses cannot enlighten the mind; "the mind . . . hath but her own nature and original notions (which by the strangeness and darkness of this tabernacle of the body are sequestered) again revived and restored." And in a different context he goes on to employ from Plato's *Meno*, locus classicus of the doctrine of Reminiscence—where an untutored slave-boy on seeing a succession of diagrams enunciates the general proposition that the square on the diagonal of a square is double the original figure—a Platonic answer to the question of inquiry: How, asks Plato, can one inquire concerning that which he does not know? And he answers, "*Whosoever seeketh, knoweth that which he seeketh for in a general notion; else how else shall he know it when he hath found it.*"[20]

Thus far does Bacon follow the Platonists in their epistemological theory; but he refuses to go with them the whole way. The Platonists distinguish between two spheres, which belong in the act of perception to two respective faculties, one of sense, the other of reason: in the former the Sun is both the cause and the object of sight; in the latter the Good is both the cause and the object of intelligence. And when the Good is identified by them with God, the Divine Being accordingly becomes the apt object of human cognition, his nature and thoughts being given an epistemological correspondence to the Forms which are the proper objects of rational human perception. In this conclusion

[19]VI, 58; VIII, 71, 137, 231; IX, 65. [20]VI, 88, 93, 271.

Bacon cannot agree: because for him man remains a creature of limited, finite capacities, shut within his senses; and the realm of sense, with its fleeting particulars is at best no more than an "image" of the celestial world. It is true that on one occasion at least Bacon uses language which suggests extreme Platonism, when, in contrasting false mental images with the true mental objects of science, he writes, "There is a great difference between the Idols of the human mind and the Ideas of the divine." He immediately proceeds, however, to make clear that for him "the Ideas of the divine" do not represent the nature and thoughts of God the Creator, but are expressly limited to "the true signatures and marks set upon the works of creation as they are found in nature." "It is true," he explains,

> that the contemplation of the creatures of God hath for end (as to the natures of the creatures themselves) knowledge, but as to the nature of God, no knowledge, but wonder; which is nothing else but contemplation broken off, or losing itself.... There is no proceeding in invention of knowledge but by similitude; and God is only self-like, having nothing in common with any creature, otherwise than as in shadow and trope. Therefore attend his will as himself openeth it, and give unto faith that which unto faith belongeth; for more worthy is it to believe than to think or know, considering that in knowledge (as we are now capable of it) the mind suffereth from inferior natures; but in all belief it suffereth from a spirit which it holdeth superior and more authorized than itself.
>
> To conclude, the prejudice hath been infinite that both divine and human knowledge hath received by the intermingling and tempering of the one with the other; as that which hath filled the one full of heresies, and the other full of speculative fictions and vanities.[21]

[21] VI, 29, cf. 36, 39; VIII, 72.

MUSIC IN POETRY

NORTHROP FRYE

THE epithet "musical" as applied to poetry has been the source of many crude misunderstandings; yet it deserves to be treated with respect, for it belongs to an equally distinguished art. There are two ways in which it can be properly used. It may describe poetry with accompanying music, or it may describe poetry which shows the direct or indirect influence of music, direct influence perhaps implying some technical knowledge on the part of the poet. It is this second kind of musical poetry that is our subject.

Form in art is bound up with recurrence. When the form is spatial, as in painting, we usually call the recurrence in it a pattern; when it is temporal, as in music, we call it a rhythm. Poetry is, like music, a temporal and rhythmic art, but it also communicates images like painting. A personal bias may incline a poet to emphasize one quality and minimize the other. He may think of poetry as a cinema in which images flash across a stationary background or as a vehicle which collects images in the course of its own movement. We need extreme examples of this, for the distinction, though real enough, has admittedly a vague boundary. Here, then, is a fairly extreme instance of "cinematic" poetry, from Tennyson's *Oenone:*

> O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
> Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
> I waited underneath the dawning hills,
> Aloft the mountain lawn was dewy-dark,
> And dewy dark aloft the mountain pine:
> Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris,
> Leading a jet-black goat white-horn'd, white-hooved,
> Came up from reedy Simois all alone.

And here is a fairly clear case of "vehicular" poetry, from Browning's *The Flight of the Duchess:*

> I could favour you with sundry touches
> Of the paint-smutches with which the Duchess
> Heightened the mellowness of her cheek's yellowness
> (To get on faster) until at last her
> Cheek grew to be one master-plaster
> Of mucus and fucus from mere use of ceruse:
> In short, she grew from scalp to udder
> Just the object to make you shudder.

In the extract from Browning speed is a positive factor: it must be read as music is played, at a metronome beat. Tennyson, on the other hand, has tried to minimize the sense of movement: his poem should be read as he himself would have read it, very slowly and with much dwelling on the vowels. Both extracts repeat sounds very obtrusively, but the repetitions in Tennyson are there to slow down the advance of ideas (particularly in the first two lines), to compel the rhythm to return on itself, so to speak, and to elaborate, with the aid of the vowels, what is essentially a *pattern* of sound. In Browning the rhymes are intended to sharpen the accentuation of the beat: as they are sown more thickly the speed increases, and the narrator's exasperation with it, as far as "ceruse." Browning does not want a sound-pattern: he wants a cumulative rhythm. The speed and sharp accent of Browning's poetry, then, are musical features in it which Tennyson's poetry does not possess. It is difficult to see what the words Browning puts in parentheses can be except a musical direction: *più mosso*. Even thus far, we hardly need biographies to tell us that Browning knew much more about music than Tennyson and was much more likely to be influenced by it.

But a more important point remains. Music is not a sequence of harmonies: the word "harmony" in music ought always to be in inverted commas. Music is a sequence of discords ending in a harmony. When a family lives in "harmony" it is in a stable and permanent situation: when music attains "harmony" it has reached its final resolving chord and is all over. Technically, "harmonies" in music are divided into concords and discords: the former are the common chords, which give an effect of completeness and aural satisfaction; the latter are all other possible chords, which require concords to complete or "resolve" them. But in any piece of actual music *all* chords are discords except the last. Any common chord but the tonic sounds incomplete, that is, it is a discord: so does an inversion of the tonic; and even the tonic in root position is still made a discord by the *form* of the music, which demands more music to complete itself rhythmically and satisfy the mind. In other words music is a process of

> Untwisting all the chains that tie
> The hidden soul of harmony.

Therefore all such phrases as "smooth musical flow" or "harsh unmusical diction" are generally the precise opposite of what we

should say if we were to use the word "musical" in any sort of relation to music. When a poet who obviously knows what he is doing produces a harsh, rugged, dissonant poem, music is probably the cause of it. For such a diction is the poetic equivalent of counterpoint, and the musically-thinking poet often needs it to give his poem the tension and the driving accented impetus of music. When we find a careful balancing of vowels and consonants and a dreamy sensuous flow of sound, we are probably dealing with an unmusical poet. When we find sharp barking accents, crabbed and obscure language, mouthfuls of consonants and the bite and grip of many monosyllables, we are probably dealing with a musician.

Certain corollaries follow. The musical, or cacophonous, diction is better fitted for the grotesque and horrible, or for invective and abuse. It demands a long cumulative rhythm sweeping the lines up into larger rhythmic units such as the paragraph. Hence musical poets are apt to distrust too obtrusive a rhyme-scheme because it interrupts the rhythmic continuity they want unless the lines are very short. Thus the musician Campion's brilliant *Observations in the Art of English Poesie* (1602) is opposed to rhyme, and Milton points out that rhymed heroic verse is "of no true musical delight" because musical poetry must have "the sense variously drawn out from one verse into another." When Donne uses the heroic couplet, for instance, he parodies it; when Milton uses the Petrarchan sonnet he very nearly bursts it (in fact actually does so in the *New Forcers of Conscience*). Browning, we have seen, has a musical use for rhyme, but that is largely his own invention.

Musical poetry is, of course, very likely to relapse into doggerel or prosiness in the attempt to fill out these larger rhythms, but it is congenial to a gnarled intellectualism of the so-called "metaphysical" type. It goes without saying that it is irregular in metre, leans heavily on enjambement, and makes an important feature of syncopation, in poetry the clash between metrical and semantic rhythms. This syncopation is a sure mark of musical poetry, and helps to distinguish it from speeded-up unmusical verse. Hopkins's "sprung rhythm" is in origin a musical idea, wherever he derived it: in Swinburne's anapests or the placid gum-chewing rhythm of *Evangeline* there is little musical influence. *The Heretic's Tragedy* is a musical poem; *Thyrsis* is not. *The*

Jolly Beggars is: the *Ode on a Grecian Urn* is not. Smart's *Song to David*, with its pounding thematic words and the fortissimo explosion of its coda, is a musical *tour de force*;[1] Pope's *Messiah* is not musical. Vachel Lindsay is musical and Conrad Aiken is not, and so on.

If the word "musical" is sentimentally used, we have said, it will be applied especially to those poems remarkable for levying no contribution on music whatever: if it is used as a vague metaphor meaning simply "pleasing," it may come as something of a shock to hear *The Rape of the Lock* called unmusical. But it is no more derogatory to it to call it unmusical than to call it a bad example of blank verse if the word "unmusical" means, as it does throughout this article, poetry in which no connection with the art of music is perceptible. The ancient doctrine that the music of the spheres was a harmony is perhaps the oldest source of this confusion. In *At a Solemn Musick* Milton makes the discordant music of earth the symbol of the life of fallen man: in heaven there will be "perfect Diapason," which in terms of the music we know means spending all eternity on one note. The same paradox is indicated, though less clearly, in *Abt Vogler*, and gives an additional twist to the ironic conclusion of Dryden's *St. Cecilia Ode*. But with less careful writers the symbolic and literal senses of "harmonious" music were easily confounded.

Browning is an excellent blackboard example of a musical poet. He has all the musical characteristics we have mentioned and several more. His love of swift movement, of horses galloping from Ghent to Aix and of rats scurrying into the river, could have been shared by anyone, but only a musician would be interested in the stumbling rhythm of a funeral procession scrambling up a steep hillside. Even the slower movements, *Love among the Ruins*, for example, keep up an insistent beating rhythmic figure, like a Bach aria. The last lines of his poems often contain a distinct "resolution," ranging from the sudden thrust at the end of *Porphyria's Lover* to the magnificent coda of Guido's death speech, and the same musical propulsion toward a point of repose can be seen in the many long defences of the ultimately indefensible. His fondness

[1]There is no explicit recognition of this in Browning's *Parleying* with Smart, but his admiration for the poem is obviously connected with it. Smart's interest in the musical effects possible to poetry is clearly marked in *Jubilate Agno*, sec. XVIII (ed. Stead, London, 1939).

for the theme-with-variations form is reflected in *Pippa Passes* and *The Ring and the Book*. To insist on all the poems on musical subjects or on the various uses made of music, in the development of *Saul* for instance, would only be to labour the point.

II

The distinction we have been making is less easy to draw before the death of Chaucer. In alliterative verse the number of syllables within the rhythmic beat may vary, just as the number of notes in a measure of music may vary. That gives alliterative poetry a musical freedom we hardly meet again before the Blake Prophecies. The rhymed romances are perhaps not so well entitled to this freedom, but they help themselves none the less.[2] The lightness of the Middle English line, however, makes it a difficult medium for a motionless, resonant, contemplative poem of the sort Pope, Keats and Tennyson habitually produced. *The Pearl* is an example of the amount of elaboration necessary, and even *The Pearl's* poet was a musician.[3] Thus, though one hardly feels that Chaucer was much influenced by music,[4] his light tripping line, his narrative continuity, his dry impersonal style and the utter lack of any kind of sound-pattern in him (proved by the two versions of his Prologue to the *Legend of Good Women*) make it hard to classify him with the three poets just mentioned. That wonderful contest of wryteling and gogeling, *The Owl and the Nightingale*, is written in octosyllabics as smooth as Chaucer's, but it is two-part contrapuntal music all the same: it is impossible not to see something of what would later be called divisions on a ground behind it. The nightingale descants on the owl's continuous monotony, and the owl's *cantus firmus* insists on the nightingale's elaborateness and periodic exhaustion.

However that may be, modern musical poetry begins with the much-cursed Lydgate. Lydgate is not a great poet, and it is perhaps impossible to place him much higher than, say, Southey, whom he resembles in many respects. But he was no fool. He realized (occasionally) the futility of trying to imitate Chaucer, and he

[2]That the *Sir Thopas* stanza can be admirable for musical poetry is shown by the *Song to David*.

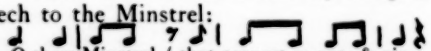
[3]Chapman, in *P.M.L.A.*, XLVI, 177-81.

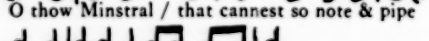
[4]Of course some of those who read the rough and bumpy lines of the pre-Tyrwhitt editions would take him for a musical poet: the use made of him in the *Shepheards Calender* indicates that Spenser did.

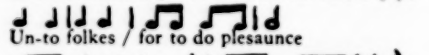
realized that the language as then pronounced was in too chaotic a state for a strict metre of any kind. He had therefore to borrow a hint from the exponents of rim-ram-ruf and develop a much freer pentameter line. This line is more heavily accented than Chaucer's and is far more syncopated; the result is that it soon falls back into the old four-beat musical rhythm of alliterative verse. At first we are tempted to apply to Lydgate what the Minstrel says to Death in the *Danse Macabre:*

> This newe daunce / is to me so straunge
> Wonder dyverse / and passyngli contrarie
> The dredful fotynge / doth so ofte chaunge
> And the mesures / so ofte sithes varie.

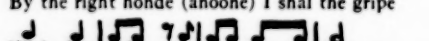
But there is a dance there all the same: try the preceding stanza, Death's speech to the Minstrel:

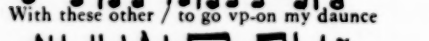

O thow Minstral / that cannest so note & pipe


Un-to folkes / for to do plesaunce


By the right honde (anoone) I shal the gripe

With these other / to go vp-on my daunce


Ther is no scape / nowther a-voydaunce


On no side / to contrarie my sentence

For yn musik / be crafte & accordaunce

Who maister is / shew his science.

Analysed prosodically as a pentameter stanza of Chaucer's *ABC* type, the above is hopeless. The last line is not a pentameter at all. Read as a continuous four-beat line of musical poetry, it is quite simple. And the musical reading brings out what the prosodic analysis could never do, the grotesque, leaping-skeleton lilt of the voice of Death ending in the measured irony of the last line. My reading happens to elide the e in "cannest" and pronounce it in "folkes," but if the scansion of Lydgate is musical rather than metrical we need not worry about this as long as we keep the four-beat rhythm. The same thing applies to caesural or final e's and to words he may have accented differently, such as "Minstral." We are not dealing with licentious deviations from Chaucer but with a different kind of verse altogether. Lydgate had, of course,

no consistent poetic policy, but nevertheless he, not Chaucer, is the metrical ancestor of three of our most musical poets, Skelton, Dunbar and Wyatt.

The essential feature of the Skeltonic metre is that it is a musician's attempt to cut the line to the bone in order to get as many accents and as much rhythmic variety as possible. The spirited prelude to *Phyllyp Sparowe* should be read exactly as the above quotation from Lydgate was read, four beats to a line. It is a quick, decisive, marching rhythm, with more rests and more accented beats coming together than we found in Lydgate. It needs dynamic markings, too, which Skelton does not provide:[5]

Pla ce bo,	*Allegro con brio, forte*
Who is there, who?	
Di le xi,	
Dame Margery;	
Fa, re, my, my,	
Wherefore and why, why?	*un poco accel.*
For the sowle of Philip Sparowe,	
That was late slayn at Carowe,	
Among the Nones Blake,	*a tempo, piano*
For that swete soules sake,	
And for all sparowes soules,	*rall.*
Set in our bederolles,	*pianissimo*
Pater noster qui,	*a tempo, forte*
With an *Ave Mari,*	
And with the corner of a Crede,	
The more shalbe your mede.	*rall. mf.*

Skelton is not always so elaborate, but his speed is very seldom out of control. We do not expect a musician to lose his head merely because he is composing an Allegro instead of an Adagio, and Skelton, like Scarlatti after him, gets fidgety in a slow rhythm. Put him in the rhyme royal stanza, as in *The Garland of Laurell*, and he will tear it to pieces:

> That longe tyme blew a full tymorous blaste,
> Like to the Boriall wyndes, whan they blowe,
> That towres and tounes and trees downe cast,
> Drove clouds together like dryftes of snowe;
> The dredful dinne drove all the route on a row;
> Som trembled, som girned, som gasped, som gased,
> As people half pevissh, or men that were mased.

Notice how the speed gathers from the first four words, helped by

[5]These are rare in poetry: the *mezzoforte* direction for *Lycidas*, "Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string," is an example.

increasing alliteration, until it explodes in the galloping anapests of the last line. This represents a development of the rhyme royal which reaches its apogee in Wyatt's *They Fle from Me*, a poem which bears the relation to the rhyme royal of Hopkins's *Windhover* to the sonnet. In passages more typically Skeltonic than this the rhythm is reinforced with scraps of Latin, with nonsense syllables (which have an important place in musical poetry), with refrains (the refrain in Skelton or Dunbar is a thematic recurrence: in *Oenone* it establishes a similarity of pattern), and with long passages of anaphora which resemble the sequential repetitions of music. In *The Garland of Laurell* the poems to Margery Wentworth, Margaret Hussey and Gertrude Statham are miniature musical rondos of the ABACA type.

The musical poet's instinct to use his technical resources in cursing somebody was doubtless responsible for the development of "flyting" as a literary exercise. In Dunbar's *Flyting with Kennedy* a very intricate rhyming and metrical scheme is completely subordinated to the pounding accent:

> Mauch mutton, byt buttoun, peilit gluttoun, air to Hilhous;
> Rank beggar, ostir dregar, foule fleggar in the flet;
> Chittirlilling, ruch rilling, lik schilling in the milhous;
> Baird rehator, theif of natour, fals tratour, feyindis gett . . . .

Dunbar is a more restless experimenter than Skelton: not all of his experiments come off, however, and even so brilliant an effort as *Ane Ballat of Our Lady*, with its involved repetition of sounds like the clashing of bells, is, considered as literary jazz, somewhere between *The Bells* and *Alexander's Feast*. On the other hand, the great *Dance of the Seven Deidly Sinnis* ranks easily with the best musical grotesqueries of Browning and Burns. Wyatt, too, is a musical radical, much closer to Skelton and Dunbar than to the conservative, unmusical reformer Surrey. He is the culmination of the post-Chaucerian musical tradition, and one of the subtlest lyric craftsmen in the language, though his beauty was concealed for centuries by bad editing. Take this sonnet:

> I abide and abide and better abide,
> And, after the olde proverbe, the happie daye:
> And ever my ladye to me dothe saye,
> "Let me alone and I will provyde."
> I abide and abide and tarrye the tyde
> And with abiding spede well ye maye:
> Thus do I abide I wott allwaye,
> Nother obtayning nor yet denied.

Aye me! this long abidyng
Semithe to me as who sayethe
A prolonging of a dieng dethe,
Or a refusing of a desyred thing.
Moche ware it bettre for to be playne,
Then to saye abide and yet shall not obtayne.[6]

This is not a preliminary draft for Surrey, but a musical sonnet thought out in more poetic dimensions than Surrey knew existed. The rhythm opens with a Skeltonic vigour; there is the repeated clang of "abide" and the musical (but poetically very audacious) sequential repetition of the first line in the fifth. Then as hope follows expectancy, doubt hope, and despair doubt, the lively rhythm gradually slows down and collapses. In his ability to make the rhythm follow the curves of the meaning Wyatt has no superior.

Surrey, however, established a new pentameter line for his century. Its prestige captured Spenser, who had begun with accentual experiments and contrapuntal singing-matches, but for his epic moved away from musical rhythms, as Milton moved toward them. Shakespeare, however, and most Elizabethan drama with him, grew steadily swifter in movement, breaking out of the line into galloping recitativos, with the diction becoming sharper and more dissonant, the imagery grimmer and more sombre, the thought more tangled and obscure—in short, more musical in every way. The use of music by Shakespeare, however, is outside our scope: his musical accompaniments and imagery have been dealt with, notably by Granville Barker and Wilson Knight, but such features as the contrapuntal construction of *King Lear* have yet to be analysed.

The metrical basis of Donne and Herbert, too, is musical: a fact not always realized by their imitators. But Crashaw is the most ambitious musician of the metaphysical group. *Musicks Duell* describes a typically baroque form, the aria with instrumental accompaniment which had become increasingly popular since about 1600. To carry on an elaborate detailed description of the most abstract and wordless of arts for nearly two hundred lines, and make the result successful poetry, is (so far as I know) an unrivalled feat. It is perhaps worth noting that when the musician reaches his full close, or diapason, there is nothing for the nightingale to do but burst, which proves our point that all music preserves the tension of discord.

[6] *Poems of Sir Thomas Wiat*, ed. Foxwell, I, 34.

Crashaw is one of the few musical poets whose diction presents a smooth surface. His imagery, though often called sensuous, has a musical suggestiveness, depending both on precision of sound and vagueness of sight. His religious poetry often begins with some kind of icon: a Biblical text, an emblem, a picture of St Teresa, a crucifix, and the poem itself is a mental response, controlled by his ear, to the devotional stimulus of that icon. In his poem on the Sacrament he says to his other four senses:

> Your ports are all superfluous here,
> Saue That which lets in faith, the eare.

The result is that the sound of his poetry is more *legato* than that of most musical poets: it has a haunting, evocative quality to it worthy of Coleridge, and generally found in unmusical poets like him. For most of his great religious poems Crashaw uses a free fantasia or ode, which he often calls a hymn. The organization of these hymns is purely musical, and for the most part they require a very fluent line which can lengthen or shorten at will, a relentless pushing enjambement, and a fortissimo climax at the end. In the coda of *The Flaming Heart* this climax is weighted with alliteration and anaphora, as in the *Song to David*. More technical is the thematic use of words, of "love," "lord," "life" and "death" in the St Teresa Ode, which opens:

> Loue, thou art Absolute sole lord
> Of *Life* & *Death* . . .;

and closes:

> Which who in death would liue to see,
> Must learn in life to dy like thee;

and is analogous to music, in which the tonality is established at the beginning and returned to at the end.

Cowley's Pindaric was evidently intended as a rhythmically *durchcomponirt* development of the Crashaw hymn, in which, as in Wyatt, the rhythm and meaning would coincide. In *Davideis* Cowley attempted a musical epic in which his Pindaric experiments were to be incorporated but based on the heroic couplet. This disastrous error ruined the *Davideis*, and Milton's rejection of rhyme for *Paradise Lost* is its epitaph. Nevertheless, the *Davideis* is an impressive monument of musical poetry. Cowley has an elaborate philosophy of music, some of it Platonic, much of it original. He chose David as a musical poet on whom he could centre that philosophy. The creative artist imitates the Creator-

God, whose creation is an energetic contrapuntal thrust and counterthrust of elements:

> As first a various unform'd *Hint* we find
> Rise in some god-like *Poets* fertile *Mind*, . . .
> Such was *Gods Poem*, this *Worlds* new *Essay*;
> So wild and rude in its first draught it lay; . . .
> *Water* and *Air* he for the *Tenor* chose,
> *Earth* made the *Base*, the *Treble Flame* arose . . . .

The ordering of elements in the macrocosm by God is paralleled by the ordering of humours in the microcosm by the artist; therefore music is therapeutic and David was able to cure Saul by music.[7]

Two features in Milton's use of music may be glanced at. One is his careful perfecting of the enjambed paragraph, which begins with a set of three poems (*On Time*, *At a Solemn Musick* and *Upon the Circumcision*), and, after wriggling through the sonnets and the paraphrase of Horace, forms the unit of the epics and expands into the recitativos of *Samson Agonistes*. The other is his use of resonant names, which is intended to produce a musical roar of sound in place of what must necessarily be vague imagery, Milton's subject being what it is. Like Crashaw, like Jeremy Taylor, like many baroque writers, Milton must be read with a myopic eye and a keen ear, which should not miss such details as the vowel-crescendo of which he is so fond:

> Yet once more, O ye Laurels . . . ;[8]
> O Prince, O Chief, of many Throned Powers . . . .[9]

"All passion spent" brings the great musical period of English poetry to a full close. The unmusical stopped couplet of Waller and Pope (Dryden needs qualification) then held sway, and Samuel Johnson, with his dislike of blank verse, of "the old manner of continuing the sense ungracefully from verse to verse," and of any sacrifice of clarity of thought to speed of movement, preserves a consistently anti-musical attitude to poetry. "The musick of the English heroic line strikes the ear so faintly that it is easily lost, unless all the syllables of every line co-operate together: this co-operation can be obtained only by the preservation of every verse unmingled with another, as a distinct system of sounds."[10] This dogma is a manifesto against not only Milton but all musical writing.

[7]Note 32 to *Davideis*, Book I. This explanation, which is worthy of Paracelsus, comes rather oddly from the panegyrist of Bacon and Hobbes.

[8]*Lycidas*, l. 1. [9]*Paradise Lost*, I, 128. [10]*Life of Milton*.

The trend away from Pope and Johnson was less musical than one might at the time have expected. Burns of course was a musician. Blake, though a painter, preferred musical poetry: his frequent use of the term "Preludium" in the Prophecies has a musical reference which Wordsworth's "Prelude" hardly possesses. But if Wordsworth had possessed more knowledge of music and had received more intelligent criticism his unfairly ridiculed attempts at high-speed musical grotesquerie, such as *The Idiot Boy* and *Peter Bell*, might have borne more fruit. Southey, too, badly needed a musical backing for his persistent experiments. In his preface to *Thalaba* his ignorance of it makes him stammer and mumble where Milton had spoken clearly: "I do not wish the *improvisatorè* tune;—but something that denotes the sense of harmony, something like the accent of feeling,—like the tone which every poet necessarily gives to poetry."

In the nineteenth century a great deal of reverent lip-service was paid to music by poets, in our language notably by Poe in *The Poetic Principle*. Few of the devotees of pure sound, however, had any real knowledge of music or any clear idea how to transfer its resources to poetry. Most of them went straight back to the Tennysonian unmusical sound-pattern, and they are partly responsible for the fact that the literary meaning of musical is unmusical. Browning is the only real musician of importance until the obvious poetic possibilities of jazz began to interest Vachel Lindsay, the author of *Sweeney Agonistes*, and Mr Auden, whose *Oxford Book of Light Verse* is almost an anthology of musical poetry.

III

These few suggestions, it is hoped, may explain a number of phenomena in English poetry that have so far not been satisfactorily explained, and provide hints for explaining others. Many further questions must here be left untouched. A discussion of musical prose, for instance, would centre on *Tristram Shandy* and *Ulysses*: the former has a very subtle and intricate musical organization. Perhaps, too, musical poetry is a wider term than poetry influenced by music. *Beowulf* is as musical in our sense as Milton, and Layamon has Skelton's rattle and bounce: were these poets influenced by contemporary music? Possibly the genius of Northern Europe which produced the alliterative line and seems to have taken the lead in the development of contrapuntal music

was also responsible for musical poetry as an independent though integral growth. Is not musical poetry confined to the Teutonic languages in any case? Surely the structure of French verse, for instance, nearly precludes it, and a great French musical writer like Rabelais (Sterne's ancestor in this respect) we should expect to turn to prose. Whether this is true or not, music has been a continuous and important tradition in English poetry since *The Owl and the Nightingale* at least, quite apart from its frequent appearance beside it in song and ballad.

THE WAR AND OPINION

I. THE RACE MYTH

C. W. M. Hart

. . . Of all vulgar modes of escaping from the consideration of the effect of social and moral influences upon the human mind, the most vulgar is that of attributing the diversities of conduct and character to inherent natural differences.—John Stuart Mill (1844)

Mill is generally reckoned as one of those who moulded nineteenth-century thought. Yet, despite his authority and his wide audience, and despite a century of progress and popular education (both so-called) since his day, the above statement is as true, and the error criticized in it is as widespread, as when he wrote it. The most vulgar mode of escaping from sociological thinking is as vulgar as ever, and all the research and teaching of social scientists from Mill to Franz Boas seem powerless to diminish it. The war and the "racial" problems which it has underlined have led to much new publication on the subject; yet on essential points there is nothing new in the recent books.[1] All of them from different approaches and with different material attempt to refute the popular notions, and several of the writers hint at a certain despondency. If race notions were only dying hard, the situation would be satisfactory: despondency comes from the uneasy feeling, in Barzun and Boas at least, that race notions are not dying but increasing, that the social scientists are fighting a losing fight. This tenacity of racial mythology becomes even more striking when we consider the history of the last hundred years; for in that time not only scientific research but world events themselves have proved over and over again the truth of Mill's thesis. In Mill's time the Japanese, if anybody thought about them at all, were described as backward, stupid, unmechanical, primitive. Today, their "national character" is evaluated very differently. Early in the nineteenth century Madame de Staël, with the complete agreement of her contemporaries, analysed the German

[1]The following is a select list of them: J. Barzun, *Race: A Study in Modern Superstition* (London, Methuen, 1938); F. Boas, *The Mind of Primitive Man* (revised edition; New York and Toronto, Macmillan, 1938); R. Firth, *Human Types* (London, Nelson, 1939); Julian Huxley and A. C. Haddon, *We Europeans* (London, Penguin Books, 1938); M. Mead, *From the South Seas* (New York, Morrow, 1939); Warner, *et al.*, *Color and Human Nature* (Washington, American Council on Education, 1941).

natural character in some such terms as these: "The Germanic race [is] loyal, good and simple but dreamy, melancholy, full of sentiment, music, abstract thought, . . . and beer, added unsympathetic observers. In contrast the 'Latins' were felt to be more practical and worldly, little given to abstract ideas and masters only of the art of domination."[2] And this picture carried on well into the nineteenth century. In 1852 a scholarly Frenchman, Eugene Loudun, was even more explicit. His articles in *Le Pays*, called "The Three Races," classified all European writers, artists and peoples as either English, French or German. His description of the German race is worth quoting:

> German thought is in fact but a vague idealistic philosophy and the German universities can boast no science. Politically Germany must be republican on account of the race's lack of order. More than that the Germans must be socialists and communists but they are harmless since they are honest and respectful of tradition. Besides they do not know even how to fight. They lazily wait for trouble and their land is always the theatre of war.[3]

This, be it noted, was written only sixteen years before the Franco-Prussian War.

Opinions about Russian "national character" have similarly changed drastically not once but several times in the last century. If so-called national character can change so easily in a hundred years, it is valid to ask how there can possibly be any genetic basis for it. The biologists, who are sometimes accused of being responsible for the prevalence of race myths, are unanimous in holding that genetic changes, even in the lower animals, take a great number of generations to come about, and in a complex and long-lived creature such as man, the amount of time required for even slight genetic alteration is enormous. If then we ask what is responsible for these changes not in racial characteristics but in opinions about racial characteristics, we find the answer not in blood but in world events. The most impressive demonstrations that "national character" is not a matter of fact but a matter of fashion have been given not by the scientists, but by Hitler and Stalin in the twentieth century and by Bismarck and Commodore Perry in the nineteenth. Bismarck moulded Germany into a united and confident nation by carrying out a policy of a political and ultimately of an educational character. As a result of his policy German "blood" did not alter (biologically that is out of the question); but the Germans' opinion of themselves changed as did

[2]Barzun, p. 115. [3]*Ibid.*, p. 122.

the opinions of the rest of the world about Germans. Seen in this light "race" is a belief, the details of which have to be altered whenever the world situation or the political situation or the recent history of a country alters; its use is not to describe any constant factor or to explain any dynamic process of history, but to rationalize things as they are. When Germany is weak nationally and politically, the German race is believed to be genetically incompetent and "unpolitical"; when Germany as a result of certain institutional changes becomes strong, aggressive and militarily powerful, the Germans become (to their neighbours) genetically aggressive and fierce. It is another example of the old sociological thesis, that it is the institutional changes that really count in history: the beliefs come dragging along after them and change as a result of them. Commodore Perry was not interested in changing the "race" or the "national character" of the Japanese; he was concerned with bringing Japan into the system of world trade and finding a new market for American goods. But Perry's guns have brought about as one of their necessary results great changes in the beliefs concerning the "national characteristics" of the Japanese.

Recent history is so crowded with such examples that the general proposition would seem to be self-evident. But when we find how prevalent is race-thinking, even among those brought up on history as a compulsory subject, and with some slight knowledge of biology, we are forced to wonder how history is being taught. Confronted with a barbarous use of race-thinking in Nazi Germany, we proceed to meet it not by arguments based upon the unsoundness of race-thinking, but by counter-assertions that the German "race" is "naturally uncivilized," and that nothing would be so likely to ensure the future peace of the world as its extermination. It is necessary only to imagine Allied anthropologists smelling out members of the "German race" for extermination, to be struck by the similarity to the all-too-real activities of German anthropologists smelling out "non-Aryans" for sterilization. A further parallel may be drawn. The activities of medieval witch-doctors trying Joan of Arc (and deciding her case according to their political affiliations) strike us as ludicrous today not because we have improved our methods of witch-finding, but because we know that they were looking for something which had no existence in fact. Any attempt to exterminate any so-

called race in the modern world is equally ludicrous and for the same reason—because races in the modern world are as non-existent as witches in the middle ages.

In the list of recent writers, Barzun, not an anthropologist but a *littérateur*, is the only one who recognizes this fact. The anthropologists, though thoroughly opposed to the vulgar race notions of Hitler or the Ku Klux Klan, weaken their case by simply refuting Hitler in detail while still insisting that such a concept as race is scientifically necessary and desirable. Huxley and Haddon are an excellent example. They go so far as to reject not only the notion of race as used in Germany, but also the very word "race." Let us drop it entirely from our vocabularies since such crimes are committed in its name. This is very encouraging, but what follows? The substitution of "ethnic type" for "race" in contemporary speech and thought! Race-thinking is not to be eradicated, but to be replaced by "ethnic-type" thinking, a slightly more technical-sounding and pretentious terminology. So might some medieval intellectual have said loftily, " 'Witch' is a vulgar word much abused by the ignorant. Let us give up its use entirely and speak instead of 'one possessed.' " It surely requires more than verbal change to combat the menace of the racial disease.

The tendency of otherwise sound anthropologists to cling to their beloved concept of race even when engaged in vigorously combating the ideas of Dr Goebbels requires explanation, and like so much else in modern scientific methodology, it has its roots in the history of nineteenth-century science. Anthropology, especially physical and racial anthropology, arose out of the Darwinian controversy, and the Darwinian controversy, in the popular mind at least, was an argument about the origin of man, an event which, however or wherever it occurred, certainly occurred in the dim and distant past. Hence anthropology early became tainted with antiquarianism and has never outgrown that taint. The research of the anthropologists into the dim and distant past of man led to certain hypotheses as to his biological development, which may be briefly recapitulated. The human species, like any other species, goes back presumably to one single line of ancestry, just as all existing dogs go back to a single type of dog. As population increased, groups of early men moved away from the centre of single origin into other parts of the world, where they became (*a*) isolated, (*b*) inbred with each other, (*c*) adapted to their new

environment. After long periods of isolation, inbreeding and local adaptation, noticeably distinct types of men were produced, each distinct type confined to a distinct locality. The same has been true of dogs: in isolated areas distinct breeds were produced, as is still witnessed by their frequently geographical names—Irish terriers, spaniels, danes, afghans. How distinct a particular group of isolated men (potential races) became from other groups, depended upon its degree of geographical isolation and the length of time that isolation was preserved. The Australian aborigines who appear to have preserved their isolation from remote antiquity until the eighteenth century are strikingly different in appearance from the rest of mankind and have therefore some claim to be regarded as the only pure race still in existence. On the other hand, any group inhabiting an area near the centres of world population, the Near East for example, clearly could not retain its isolation for any length of time.

There was a point in time, though we shall probably never be able to fix it, when the factors making for isolation (sparse world population, tribal conditions, lack of means of transportation) began to be overtaken by the factors making for contact (increasing world population, roads, ships, trade routes, wars of conquest, migrations into already occupied areas). As soon as this happened, the trend towards distinct breeds was checked and reversed by the opposite trend, towards hybridization, since any social mingling of isolated groups leads immediately to interbreeding between them. The point in time at which the tendency towards hybridization overtook the forces making for distinct breeds may be impossible to fix, but we can be quite sure that, for the centres of world population like Asia, Europe and Africa, it was a very long time ago indeed and that hybridization has increased in geometrical ratio ever since. The parallel with dogs still holds good. As long as the spaniels were confined to Spain, the danes to Denmark, the pomeranian to Pomerania and the pekinese to Pekin, "pure breeds" were developed. As the pure breeds moved into the wider dog world, they began to decrease and be replaced by mixtures of all kinds which can only be labelled as just plain dog.

Thus both dogs and men as species have gone through five phases of development: (1) single line of ancestry; (2) isolation of small groups; (3) development of local types with distinct characteristics (breeds); (4) breakdown of isolation, mingling of types;

(5) further mingling of all types, complete hybridization. At present, it would seem, human beings are somewhere between phase 4 and phase 5, and much more advanced towards phase 5 than the species dog, since not even the Gestapo can possibly be as effective in keeping human breeds apart as the snobbery of dog fanciers has been in keeping pure the pure breeds of dog.

The human species has not yet got to the point of being just plain human, some old survivals of pure breeds still exist. The skin-colour-hair-form differentiation between the so-called negroid, mongoloid and caucasian types is still distinct enough to warrant the hypothesis that there were once three distinct stocks for which these three names are as good as any others. But within these three stocks any subdivisions that may theoretically have existed during phase 3 have long since been quite obliterated. The attempts of the physical anthropologists—*all* physical anthropologists, not only the Germans—to distinguish theoretically different subtypes within the three stocks invariably end in failure. The failure can be gauged by the demonstrable fact that no two physical anthropologists ever reach the same classifications or the same descriptions of the ideal types. This disagreement is not really surprising: it is the same disagreement we find among five fond relatives all looking at the same baby and deciding whom the baby most resembles. The five relatives, all honest, all approaching the question objectively, must disagree in their answers because the question they are trying to answer is operationally meaningless: there is simply no way known to man of answering it. So with the physical anthropologists, the only data they have, apart from the little that archaeology can give them, come from the present population of the world, and they are far from sufficient to answer the antiquarian question, what the population of the world was like during phase 3.

All history must be conjectural unless there is evidence or some hope of finding evidence. No matter what bones, or relationships between bones, the anthropologists measure in living populations, they fail to find significant differences. Even the comparatively new discovery of blood groups yielded nothing to the racialist except the far from new knowledge that all human populations are mixed. The cephalic index, which has been measured, compared, discussed *ad nauseam* by various writers, and made the whole basis of his race classification by Professor Griffith Taylor, has been

demonstrated by Boas to be at least slightly susceptible to environmental influence. Should we be inclined to side with Griffith Taylor and disregard Boas in this respect, what does the elaborate counting of cephalic indices tell us? Nothing more than that once upon a time there were long heads, short heads and medium heads, clearly differentiated on different parts of the earth's surface. This is a most interesting antiquarian fact. But it is not certain but only probable; it tells us nothing about the present-day world in which we live; it supplies no basis for further research, but only for further antiquarian speculation; and altogether it has about as much value as the statement that once upon a time polar bears roamed around Lake Ontario.

Under these circumstances racial classifications are at best nothing more than plausible hypotheses as to what may have been the physical appearance of our ancestors many centuries ago, and at worst conflicting bits of speculative antiquarianism. In neither case are they of much use as explanations of the vagaries and diversities of human nature, especially collective human nature. Where then are we to look for the explanation of these things? The answer was given by Mill. He called them social and moral influences. They are better known today as cultural or sociological influences. The examples used earlier in this article may be repeated. The changes in German "temperament" before and after Bismarck, before and after Hitler, in the Japanese before and after Commodore Perry, in the Russians before and after Lenin and Stalin, can much less easily be explained by the mystical analysis of "blood" or "national character" than by the investigation of the social, economic, geographical and political conditions that led to Bismarck's policy, to Hitler's rise to power, to the interest of American capitalism in the Northern Pacific and to the Russian Revolution. Such investigations have been made and are being made. They all reveal an intricate web of social relationships leading up to these historical events and other intricate webs leading out of them. History is a constant shifting of complicated social equilibriums, and these are desperately difficult to understand. The specialist, appreciating the number of factors involved in even small historical happenings, despairs of being able to simplify them sufficiently for the layman to understand them, and leaves the latter with his old-fashioned straight-line cause and effect ideas. Bertrand Russell says somewhere that nobody believes

nowadays in the old one-cause and one-effect idea except Fijians and philosophers. He should have added that the general public believes in it as well, at least with regard to "blood" causing behaviour. An ambitious investigation[4] into the "temperament" and behaviour characteristics of Negro youth in Chicago reveals the same familiar answer: the crimes of Negro youth and the virtues of Negro youth are functions of their social environment and have nothing to do with race except in so far as colour is socially evaluated in Chicago. Brought up as was Bigger, in the best-selling novel *Native Son*, any one of us would act like him, and Bigger was thus brought up because that is the way Negro boys of a certain social area in Chicago are brought up. Margaret Mead,[5] another close student of race and culture, expresses the same idea: "human nature is the most malleable of raw material," and culture, as she has amply demonstrated in her South Sea researches, can mould it into the most unexpected of shapes. The list of valuable investigations into the nature of cultural influences could be extended indefinitely, but the difficulty remains. The analyses of cultural equilibrium are complicated and hard to simplify; the factors are many and the relationships intricate. The racial myth is an easy and comfortable doctrine, of the same general character as the statements that lightning causes thunder, or that rain comes from cloudbursts. It is so simple to blame everything that happens on innate natural causes. If the Germans are inherently bad, then we can either ignore them or, if they get too bad, beat them like naughty children; and if they won't reform even then, all we can do is to exterminate them. If the Negro is naturally lazy and stupid, again we are absolved from worrying about it: reform, education, raising his standard of living, are useless. It is the same old story—so well and so frequently exemplified during the depression in Canada: "The trouble with the unemployed is that they are just naturally lazy."

In 1895 Franz Boas came to certain conclusions which he published in one of the most important books of the early twentieth century, *The Mind of Primitive Man* (1911), which has just been republished in a revised edition. In a new preface Boas sums up his effect on his generation thus:

> The author delivered the first statement of these conclusions as long ago as 1895. Ever since that time the subject has remained one of his chief interests.

[4]See Warner *et al.*, *op. cit.* [5]Mead, *op. cit.*

The result of his studies has been an ever-increasing certainty of his conclusions. There is no fundamental difference in the ways of thinking of primitive and civilized man. A close connection between race and personality (or temperament or character) has never been established. The concept of race as commonly used even in scientific literature is misleading. . . . While it would seem that a great number of American students of biology, psychology and anthropology concur with these views, popular prejudice, based upon earlier scientific and popular tradition, has certainly not diminished; for race prejudice is still an important factor in our lives.

Thus the dean of American anthropology, who for nearly fifty years has been preaching a few simple propositions about race and temperament and thinking, frankly admits his failure. There is a hint of the reason in his statement. The tenacity of popular racial prejudice is to be explained, like so much else, in cultural terms, and one of the cultural terms involved is the educational system of Western Europe and North America. Boas and the students of Boas are expected to teach their doctrines to students who come out of schools steeped in racial nonsense which they have acquired in their history and literature courses—even in their "civics" courses: such racial nonsense as the "natural genius of the Anglo-Saxons for democracy," "the inherent manliness of the Nordic races," the laziness (innate) of the Negro, the inborn genius of the French for formal painting (or surrealism), and the rest of the catchwords. The teachers of what Boas calls gently "an earlier tradition" are far from blameless, and there seems no hope of that older and vicious tradition breaking down until more modern social science in our primary and high schools replaces the older disciplines.

II. WAR WITHOUT WEAPONS* — EDGAR MCINNIS

ONE of the most appalling adjustments which the present generation is being compelled to make is that imposed, not simply by the present war, but by the emergence of total war as the dominant phenomenon of our times. That is something more than the periodic outbreak of hostilities. It is a permanent condition, resulting from an over-riding purpose, which makes such terms as

**Lord Gort's Despatches.* London, H. M. Stationery Office, 1941, 35c.
The Battle of Flanders, by IAN HAY. London, H. M. Stationery Office, 1941, 25c.
Bomber Command: The Air Ministry Account of the Bomber Offensive against the Axis. Montreal, Queen's Canadian Fund for Air Raid Victims (c-o J. G. McConnell, 231 St. James St.), 1941, 75c.

"peace" and "war" obsolete in the old sense. War is not total merely when it takes the form of armed conflict. It cannot be total at that stage unless the nations engaged have already devoted years to the supreme effort which will make possible a successful resort to arms, and have subordinated all other activities to that one paramount end.

That is a conclusion which the democratic nations in particular have found the utmost difficulty in accepting. There is an instinctive intellectual resistance to a thing so utterly distasteful. The whole objective of Western civilized nations has been the creation of a steadily more abundant life, the satisfaction in increasing measure of the needs of a peaceful civilian population. To such an aim the permanence of a state of war, whether active or merely implicit, is an insuperable barrier. Yet so long as the possibility of aggression survives, so long will this odious necessity be imposed on the whole civilized world. The alternative to total war is a system which will assure total peace. Failing that, there is no hope in our lifetime for escape from the necessity of making armed supremacy the first objective of our national energies and resources.

The consequences of our failure to accept and act upon this fact when it confronted us are written large upon every page of the story of this war, and the record is not yet ended. Even after the war was upon us, we resisted the necessities which it imposed. The reluctance to disturb the normal course of life which marked the immediate pre-war years was continued with only slight modifications even when the conflict had been joined, and our initial handicaps were accentuated in a way which nearly lost us the war, and which at the very best has postponed by incalculable months the coming of victory.

These general results have long been obvious. The effect in detail, however, is something of which we have so far had only fleeting suggestions. Even the accounts which are here under review have lifted only a corner of the veil which hides the full story of British operations on the continent. Perhaps that is enough for the moment. In spite of our unshaken confidence in the final issue, the immediate trials which confront us are sufficiently grim to call upon all our fortitude. We should not be helped in our present task by too great an insistence on past failures. And these accounts of operations, brief as they are, imply only too clearly how completely inadequate were our means to confront the disaster which so nearly overwhelmed us in 1940.

The Air Ministry's account of the record of the Bomber Command is one of the most absorbing documents which has so far come out of the war. In certain respects it is even more interesting than the earlier account of the part of the Fighter Command in the Battle of Britain. The events with which it deals never quite reach the dramatic heights of that triumphant episode, which was one of the decisive battles of modern times. But the operations, particularly in the spring of 1940, have for their background the inexorable unfolding of the tragedy which culminated in the collapse of France, and the attempt with pitifully inadequate resources to stay the *débâcle* was an element in that tragedy.

That however is only part of the story recounted in this volume. It begins with the organization and equipment of the bombing force at the outset of the war. It has some illuminating things to say about tactics and personnel. It carries the account from the opening days of reconnaissance and leaflet raids to the steadily growing air offensive of last summer. It is a rounded and vigorous narrative which is as exciting as any of the thrillers that the author, in his non-official capacity, has ever produced.

Lord Gort's despatches supplement this account of air warfare with an outline of ground operations during the Battle of Flanders; and Ian Hay has summarized this material in a brief account whose emphasis on certain salient points helps to clarify the narrative. It is perhaps well to notice the precise nature of these despatches. They consist, not of the actual messages sent during the course of the operations, but of summaries of those operations after their conclusion. There are two despatches, one covering the arrival and disposition of the British troops in France, the other dealing with events from the invasion of the Low Countries to the beginning of the evacuation of Dunkirk, with a very brief appendix completing the account of the evacuation. The second despatch is dated July 25, 1940. Its receipt is acknowledged by the War Office in March, 1941. Its publication took place officially in October. The dates are not necessarily typical of the velocity of communication within the War Office.

The most profound impression left by these two accounts is that of the lack of striking power of the British forces. This was the price of inadequate preparation, and it is even more inexcusable in the case of the air force than in that of the army. The plans for an expeditionary force had been radically altered in the spring of

1939 as the consequences of Munich, and particularly the loss of the Czechs as allies, became inescapably apparent. Even then there were few signs that the British authorities realized the need for haste, and still fewer that they were aware of the demands imposed by the mechanized nature of modern war; but in any case a measure of delay was bound to be imposed by the new plans. In the case of the air force, however, the government in theory was fully aware of its importance from the very start of Hitler's re-armament. Both Baldwin and Chamberlain are on record as assuring Parliament on repeated occasions that Britain would retain air superiority over Germany. How meaningless were these promises is only too evident in the result.

The lack of operational strength on the part of the Bomber Command was little short of pathetic. The lack of mechanized strength on the part of the army is one of the preoccupations that runs right through Lord Gort's account. His tank forces—seven regiments of mechanized cavalry, two battalions whose infantry tanks were mostly armed only with machine-guns, and one regiment of obsolete armoured cars—were utterly inadequate to cope with the overwhelming armoured forces, amounting ultimately to ten divisions, which the Germans poured through the gap beyond Sedan. The British armoured division for which Gort pleaded never reached the Flanders front; the available armoured vehicles, partly as a result of the failure of certain transportation plans at a crucial moment, were almost worn out from road travel by the time they were called into action. The artillery defences were adequate only in the forward areas. Perhaps in any case it would have been difficult for the British, without more effective aid from their allies, to have retrieved the situation by counter-attacks. The state of their armoured forces made it virtually impossible.

The lack of effective co-operation between the allies is another theme which runs through both accounts. No doubt there were faults on both sides, and anyone who tries to read between the lines of Lord Gort's summary will find his curiosity roused by the many reticences which are apparent in the narrative. But he makes quite clear the failure of liaison, even if he is cautious about placing the blame; and his brief and restrained references to the confused orders which came from Weygand, and which had no relation whatever to the realities of the situation, are sad illumination on the state of mind at headquarters after the German break-through.

The account of Anglo-French relations given in *Bomber Command* is somewhat less guarded. The divergence was too wide to be glossed over; and although here too there were undoubtedly mistakes on the British side, that word is too mild for some of the actions of the French. There is an inescapable impression that, if the French military authorities did not actually wish for defeat, they showed few signs of an active will to victory; and some episodes are too grave to be classed as simply errors of judgment. The episode of the French authorities preventing a British bombing of Italy by driving trucks on to the airfield was simply a climax to a long series of obstructions which look suspiciously like treachery.

There are more encouraging passages in the latter part of *Bomber Command*—though even the descriptions of the growing air offensive carry the implications of a tremendous task in which only the first beginning of progress has as yet been made. The only encouragement which could be drawn from the Gort despatches would have to be based on the faith—only partly supported by later operations—that the lesson of Flanders has been well and truly learned. There are many aspects to that lesson besides the supreme one of the need for adequate equipment. Among them is the inability of either courage in the ranks or intelligence on the part of the leaders to cope with a competent enemy who is superior in the weapons of war. All the military plans of the allies went agley under the hammer blows of the German drive, and all the alternative plans which they tried to devise to meet the new developments were obsolete before they could be put into effect. Once they had seized the initiative, the Germans were able to keep it throughout, and to impose their own plan of battle upon an adversary who never recovered his balance. All through Lord Gort's description there are revealing passages—all the more striking because until the later stages the British retreat was forced upon the army with little serious fighting. That army was herded toward almost final disaster by events which took place thirty miles from its own front, and which placed it in a succession of disadvantageous positions that it never managed to retrieve.

> The position was, by this time, greatly complicated by the numbers of improvised forces which the quickly changing situation had made necessary.... I was convinced that the steps I had taken to secure my left flank would prove insufficient to meet the growing danger in the north.... As regards the withdrawal to the Yser the idea must be ruled out.... The series of situations which the B.E.F. had to face was not brought about by failure on their part to with-

stand enemy attacks when holding a position of their own choosing. . . . The enemy was able to concentrate no less than ten armoured divisions in the area which he had selected.

Such quotations are eloquent of the results of the German possession of the initiative. And perhaps of all the conclusions which Lord Gort draws from the campaign, the most significant is expressed in these words:

> The speed with which the enemy exploited his penetration of the French front, his willingness to accept risks to further his aim, and his exploitation of every success to the uttermost limits emphasised, even more fully than in the campaigns of the past, the advantage which accrues to the commander who knows how best to use time to make time his servant and not his master.

The Germans knew that from the start. The Japs seem to have profited only too well from the German example. We must fervently hope, not only that our own leaders have grasped it fully, but that they will be able to give it a triumphant application in the not too distant future.

JOHN GALT, DRAMATIST

G. H. Needler

FOR many years John Galt's chief ambition was to be a dramatist, and to dramatic composition he returned after he had attained a prominent place in other fields. His plays are now not easily accessible, and are read today only by the close student of the history of English drama. And yet Galt achieved through them something more than what he himself calls "that respectable degree of mediocrity which the world, without repining, soon forgets." Galt is otherwise immortal as the author of a unique gem of English prose, *The Annals of the Parish*, to mention only this work from his sixty-odd volumes of fiction, poetry, biography, history, travel, and political and economic writings. Besides, he is deserving of fame as one of the great Empire-builders.

If we except a tragedy on the story of Mary Queen of Scots, which he remodelled toward the end of his life, Galt's first efforts at drama were inspired by the Italians Goldoni and Alfieri. Returning home in 1811 from his three years' journey to the Levant, Galt was kept indoors for two or three days by wet weather at Missolonghi, the Greek town where Byron, who had been his companion on part of this journey, was destined to succumb a few years later. The master of the house where Galt was staying came to his rescue with an edition of Goldoni's comedies. These he read eagerly, and took to translating them: first, *La gelosia di Lindoro* under the title *The Word of Honour*, and then *Un curioso accidente*, calling his version *Love, Honour and Interest.*

Goldoni's comedies are written in prose, and, as Galt remarks, "his dialogue is singularly natural." We are left to wonder all the more what induced the translator to turn this natural Italian prose into English blank-verse. He is not justified in claiming that he has given a passable view of the versatile Italian's peculiarities. His failure in style cannot be better indicated than by his own words when, speaking of Goldoni's "singularly natural" dialogue, he says: "In my version it is on stilts." In the first play he has shifted the scene to London, given the characters English names, and abridged the whole considerably. "The verbal deviations and poetical expressions, in which," he says, "the difference between the English and Italian plays chiefly consists," may be illustrated

by a quotation. The Othello of the comedy, suspicious of a letter which he has found but cannot read, as it is written in French, laments in words that are Galt's but not Goldoni's:

> Oh what I would not give that I could read it.
> Dolt, dolt that I was not to have learned French,
> Had it been only but to read this letter.
> Curse on our schools and all their Greek and Latin,—
> They stuff the brain with musty pedantry,
> And teach us no one implement of use.
> . . . O damn th' intriguing jargon,
> To have all here, and not to know one word.

What has been said of the first also applies in general to the second of these translations from Goldoni.

To Galt must be conceded the honour of being a pioneer in his wish to introduce Goldoni in England. "What we chiefly respect in the two pieces," he says, "is a kind of classical purity of arrangement which is much wanted at present on the English stage," where pantomime and melodrama were rampant, to its injury.

A second and more irksome delay in Galt's homeward journey was the quarantine of eighteen days at Messina. This time the porter saved the situation by bringing him the works of Alfieri. These lofty tragedies, which mark the peak of Italian achievement in their field, he devoured with delight. The reading of Alfieri's plays did more than anything else to incite Galt to dramatic composition, and to stir in him the belief, unfounded though it proved to be, that he might make a success of writing for the stage. It was the inspiring genius of Alfieri operating upon the receptive, and at the same time quite self-conscious, mind of Galt, that produced the five plays with which he first appeared before the public as a dramatist, in the volume entitled *The Tragedies of Maddalen, Agamemnon, Lady Macbeth, Antonia, and Clytemnestra.* It was rather unfortunate for Galt's reputation as a writer of plays that opinion of his efforts in this field had to be based almost exclusively on this first volume. His twelve plays that are to be found in the *New British Theatre*, it is to be remembered, were anonymous and, with one exception, continued so; and some of them, with one or two later ones, are superior to any of these first five tragedies, which, though exhibiting power of no mean order, are the work of an ambitious apprentice hand, done in too great haste, and carelessly edited by a man who was rather too keen to see himself in print.

The five tragedies in this first volume, though directly inspired by Alfieri, are not translations as were the comedies from Goldoni. Even in the two (*Agamemnon* and *Clytemnestra*) where Alfieri has handled the same ancient classical themes, Galt is modern and untrammelled either by the classical tradition or later variations from it. *Lady Macbeth* is an audacious attempt at a new analysis of Shakespeare's subject; and the other two, though on traditional themes, are essentially his own original compositions.

Granted a little imagination to allow for the difference in the ancient setting, Agamemnon, Clytemnestra and the rest in the plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides are still more nearly creatures of flesh and blood than any of their modern imitations. And Galt, with his two tragedies on the familiar Greek themes, could at best hope to be read, not seen upon the stage. And yet it is interesting to find what the inspiration from Alfieri and his own modern instinct have made of them.

In the heyday of Romanticism John Galt stands out as the realist—in his plays, his poetry and his novels alike. That is the quality that chiefly marks his originality and accounts for his considerable influence as a writer, while at the same time it leads him not infrequently into inartistic extravagance of expression or portraiture. In the two plays *Agamemnon* and *Clytemnestra* it serves at least to save him from commonplace imitation of his predecessors. He reduces the dramas to great simplicity by having three acts instead of the conventional five, omitting some stock characters altogether, and basing the motivation of the tragedy entirely upon Clytemnestra's passionate and self-assertive nature. It will be recalled that Aeschylus emphasizes Agamemnon's assent to the sacrifice of Iphigeneia as the prime cause of Clytemnestra's hate, with jealousy of Cassandra as a secondary motive. Euripides humanizes the situation a little more by greater stress upon the woman's jealousy and her assertion of equal liberty of action with her husband:

> Whene'er the husband from his honour swerves,
> From his connubial bed estranged, the wife
> Will imitate his manners, and obtain
> Some other friend.

Alfieri has Aegisthus offer to flee in order to save Clytemnestra from a disclosure of their relations and from the wrath of her returning husband. But when she at length sees that the crisis

is inevitable and consents to flee, Aegisthus shows her that it is now too late, and at his mention of Cassandra's coming she resolves to plan Agamemnon's death. But her satisfaction in the achievement of revenge is soon destroyed by finding that Aegisthus' ambition aims even at the death of her son Orestes.

Galt modernized audaciously. Evidently feeling that the background of Greek tradition could have no natural application to the society and drama of his day, he omits all reference to Iphigeneia or Cassandra. Electra does not appear in the first play. Egysthus is not even of royal lineage, but simply the paramour of Clytemnestra, whose passion is the mainspring of the action throughout. They succeed in hoodwinking Agamemnon for the moment, and Clytemnestra plans the details of his death. As they move to the banquet-hall to celebrate the peace, Egysthus stabs Agamemnon, who is prevented from using his sword, Clytemnestra contriving to entangle it in the folds of her robe as she walks by his side. The dying King heaps his scorn upon her for her faithless duplicity. Far from penitence or remorse, she replies:

> Ay, play the man, the lord of the creation,
> And scorn the failing woman for her sin. . . .
> While you lay glowing with your captive dames,
> Or sacking towns to furnish wanton beds,
> Thought you that nature slumber'd in my veins?
> But such, forsooth, was my voluptuous lapse,
> That only death or shameful degradation
> Could expiate the sin.—Learn ere you die,
> That menial woman claims her half of love,
> And wives deserted can assert the claim.

The sequel, as portrayed by Galt in his *Clytemnestra*, follows the Greek story more closely, but with some more modern self-analysis by Clytemnestra. Before death comes to her at the hands of her Apollo-directed son, punishment has already overtaken her in the consciousness of her crime and the defection of Egysthus, who is even so base as to try to seduce Electra to his lust:

> Today, forever from my tortur'd bosom
> I cast him forth; and penitence and woe,
> For all the wretched remnant of my life,
> Shall feed upon me, till my wasted frame
> Has done atonement for its guilty passion.

Only the briefest notice can be taken here of the other three plays in the volume.

The action in Galt's *Lady Macbeth* covers but that of Shakes-

peare's fifth act. There are only two characters besides the guilty pair, and Galt uses one of them especially to create "an opportunity of introducing allusions to Scottish superstitions which Shakespeare has not touched." But he fails to add anything to the effectiveness of the Weird Sisters. Many of his speeches are oratorically, and as poetry, good, but dramatic action is wanting.

In *Maddalen* a tyrant Duke, head of a little Italian state, uses such constraint upon Maddalen that she at last yields to a political marriage with a man much older than herself. But she has already had intimate relations with his son, who, her companion from childhood, has become her lover. Of this fact the Duke, but not the husband, is aware. The inevitable disclosure of this relationship makes the tragedy, which ends with the death of the youthful lovers. More interesting, perhaps, than the heroine of the piece as an example of Galt's literary craftsmanship is the Duchess, one of Nature's irrepressible "originals," out of place, as she herself is well aware, amid the pomp and sordid baseness of the court. Galt the realist has created here his earliest example of a type of character which he was later to present in many successful variations.

In the remaining drama of this volume, *Antonia*, Galt offers a less plausible version of *The Rape of Lucrece*, where the crime is perpetrated not by force, but by trickery on the part of a groom, who has been sent with a message to Antonia that her husband is unable to return home that night. The unwitting victim takes her own life when she discovers the fraud, but proof of her innocence awaits her husband when he shall have returned.

Resentment at the refusal of his play *The Witness* (later named *The Appeal*) by the Drury Lane and Covent Garden theatres, and desire to overcome the monopoly enjoyed by them under government licence, led Galt to become the (anonymous) editor of the *New British Theatre* (at first called the *Rejected Theatre*), "A selection of original dramas not yet acted; some of which have been offered for representation but not accepted. With critical remarks by the editor." It should be observed that Galt's experience in this office softened his judgment; "for," he said, "it would absolutely not be within the range of belief to describe the sad efforts of genius which were afterwards sent to me.... I have no hesitation whatever in stating that the managers were completely vindicated in alleging that the decay of the drama was not owing to them, but

to the wretched productions they were compelled to bring forward." On the other hand, the sense of injustice rankled long; for we find him many years later saying of the management of the metropolitan theatres: "When we look to the manner in which the office has been generally filled, it would seem to offer one of the easiest chairs in which imbecility has ever reposed." The *New British Theatre* met with favour at first, but ran aground before long. Not, however, until four large volumes had been published. The Preface and the Remarks that accompany each piece furnish evidence of John Galt's serious preoccupation with the drama. Taken together, and with the addition of the numerous casual discussions of subjects connected with the stage in his *Autobiography*, *Lives of the Players*, *The Star of Destiny* and elsewhere, they form an enlightening comment on conditions in the early nineteenth century, when everybody with literary aspirations tried his hand at drama, and Byron, besides writing several plays himself, became a member of the Drury Lane committee of management.

Galt, as anonymous editor, used the *New British Theatre* for the publication of twelve of his own plays, including the two translations from Goldoni. The nine pieces that are entirely Galt's own display great variety, ranging all the way from high tragedy to opera text. It is needless, and impossible, to speak of all of them in detail.

The Prophetess is a rather feeble version in dramatic dialogue of the fall of Troy, with Cassandra the central figure, and is interspersed with indirect allusions to England in her struggle with Napoleon. *Hector*, which may be conveniently mentioned here, is a "tragic cento," in blank verse, a compilation and re-arrangement of the story of the fall of Troy, with "liberties of transposition" taken by the compiler.

The Sorceress is the story of Medea and Jason. In compact and forceful dialogue, skilful management of plot, and dramatic presentation of the jealousy that mounts to such a vengeful flame in the breast of the deserted wife and mother, Galt here displays a power near to genius. And in the treatment of this theme which had undergone so many variations at the hands of dramatists from Euripides down to his own day, Galt is interestingly independent and original. To Seneca, Corneille and La Motte (Fouqué), he says, some obligations are due for "imitations . . . of particular passages." Speaking (incognito) as editor, he tells us that he has

"undertaken to develop the working of a class of metaphysical associations, on which we are not aware that any other writer has yet professedly touched . . . . The most striking incident and novelty . . . is in giving Medea a resentful motive for the murder of her children, by Jasonides preferring to stay with his father when she had almost persuaded even Jason himself to part with the child."

Do what they will, dramatists who attempt to present Medea on the modern stage have still the problem on their hands of preserving the terrific tragedy of her character while divesting it sufficiently of the supernatural sorcery that envelops it in the ancient fable; for, even did their genius allow them, the nature of the subject forbids them to call to their aid the convenient romantic wand of a Prospero. But Galt has succeeded in a quite remarkable way in motivating the tragedy by playing upon the purely human elements of Medea's character. Only one modern dramatist—the Austrian Grillparzer— has written a really great play on this subject. In his elaborate trilogy we see Medea emerging under the masterhand of genius from the mist of ancient fable, an almost simply human embodiment of elemental passion. To Galt must be awarded the honour of having, *before Grillparzer*, made the most successful dramatic re-creation of this great tragic female character since Euripides. And this is said, remembering Seneca, Corneille and others in France, a group of Germans including Gotter, Soden, Klinger, as well as the Englishman Glover, who wrote a quite original play on this subject in 1761. With admirable skill Galt makes the secondary figure of Creusa stand out clearly as a foil to Medea. Not of her own will, but at her father's imperious bidding, is she the instrument of Medea's final humiliation by supplanting her in the affection of Jason.

In Galt's play it is Medea herself who directly, and not (as in Euripides) through the medium of the pleading children, prevails upon Creusa to accept the gift of the fatal robe. The awfulness of Medea's hidden purpose is made all the clearer by the momentary flash of pity that she shows for the innocent victim of her fury. And angrily asked by King Creon why she defies his command by remaining in Corinth, she retorts:

> There are no kings where I, Medea, am.

Her final words to Jason after she has slain her children are:

> Ay, look at me, and wonder what I am,

So foul with blood, and in my murd'rous grasp
This reeking instrument of red despair.—
Now dost thou taste the bitter of my hate;
Now dost thou know the dread Medea's power;
Now dost thou feel the pangs of my revenge;
Now, Jason, dost thou see how I did love.—
O fatal man! there is a faith in sin,
Which, violated, damns the recreant down
Deeper than all the fiends. Were we not pledged
With dreadful rites to be for ever true?
My father's injuries, my brother's blood,
And Pelias's murder bound us fast as one;
But thou hast ravish'd by thy guilt of guilt
The very honor of iniquity,
And done a sin which overtops the worst,
Making all others mean and subaltern:—
Thrice damning perjury, that defrauds the gods,
And plucks the eyes of awful justice out,—
Such, Jason, was thy crime! And what is mine?
I gave the world these victims of thy guile,
And I have taken them away again.
If mankind rise and clamor at the deed,
I'll meet them all; and tell how I have prov'd
That the paternal pang is Nature's grudge,
To yield her creatures to this cheating world.

Orpheus and *The Savoyard* are opera texts. The first, on the familiar myth, is in rhymed verse throughout,—recitative, song, chorus and slight connecting dialogue. *The Savoyard* is a longer burlesque comedy, interspersed with songs, and it is one of the two dramatic pieces in which Galt stoops to prose. With considerable musical talent himself (he composed at least four tunes, and has innumerable illustrative references to music in his writings), Galt lamented the lack of taste among the English for "that higher and nobler kind of music, which aspires to express a continued train of feeling." And here we see him, with his accustomed boyish self-confidence, dashing into the new field.

In *The Mermaid* we find the Galt of many surprises in quite a new vein. This is a charming little two-act "interlude" in which the islands of Iona, Mull and Staffa form the setting for a romantic and pathetic contact of human beings with the fairy folk of the seashore. Egged on by his spiteful mother, a young chieftain seeks the help of a haggard witch in taking revenge upon a young bride who, as the scene opens, has just been married to another. The friendly Mermaid intervenes, but at the cost of her life. Galt's

rich fancy and fine responsiveness to the play of superstition in the Scottish temperament are here well supported by dramatic simplicity of plot and lightness of diction, making a piece of distinct charm and originality. In his editorial note Galt maintains that

> of all dramatic writing, either ancient or modern, the British exhibits the greatest stock of rich and curious fancy; which, perhaps, more than any other cause, tends to render our plays tedious to the people of the Continent. There is less activity in the continental mind than in the insular. The French display, it is true, infinitely more animal vivacity than the English; but we suspect that the English are more rapid in their mental operations, and that although the former make more gesticulations in any given time, the latter, in the same time, think more thoughts; at least it will be allowed that in the dialogue of the drama the French dilate their sentiments into downright declamation, while the English are content merely to touch the keys of association in the minds of their auditors.

The Masquerade is a comedy of London society, in five acts. The plot is skilfully managed, and the dialogue shows how much better an instrument Galt might have made of his excellent prose for the rendering of Goldoni's comedies than his stilted blank verse. To be sure, his intervening practice has given him facility, and power to profit by his model. Domestic scandal, social backbiting, the rivalries and underhand dealings of authors, booksellers and literary critics, with facetious references to faddists on new theories of geology, astronomy, world population, etc., are cleverly thrown together in rapidly shifting scenes to make a highly amusing comment on London life as Galt saw it at the beginning of the last century.

Of all Galt's plays, *The Apostate, or Atlantis Destroyed* is his most ambitious effort. It is a tragedy conceived on a grand and original plan, and if his powers were not quite equal to making a success of the design, it is a remarkably creditable failure. Galt presents here a highly dramatic picture of the clash of two civilizations, a theme of which Hebbel was to give a variation, with a different setting, in his *Gyges* a generation later. The basic idea here is drawn from Rousseau's arraignment of a conventional modern civilization that would encroach upon the purer natural life of a primitive community. A European ship has been wrecked on the shore of Atlantis, the fabled western continent of pre-Columbian days. The one survivor, Antonio, a paragon of physical grace and intellectual power, and a representative product of the Christian civilization of the Old World, is rescued and received, with whole-hearted hospitality, into the primitive community

with its unspoiled natural virtues, over which rules the young King Yamos. We are called upon to accept rather a miracle of swift transformation in the way of life of the enthusiastic and impressionable young monarch, his queen, Idda, and the great majority of their people. In a few years, under the guidance of Antonio, the arts and sciences of Europe have wrought a magic change in the scene, and the Christian culture of the Old World has taken possession of the New. But not without protest. The old priest of the clan, with some followers, clings to the ancient gods and the accustomed mode of life in the refuge of the forest. The tragedy comes through a moral defect in the central figure, Antonio himself. This is a character which Galt excels in drawing, —the man whose acts are better than his inner self. The cultural remaking of the community has a sinister by-product: the young Queen becomes infatuated with Antonio, and he is unable to resist the spell of her native passion. Antonio's character is "a development of constitutional licentiousness counteracting moral intentions," as Galt himself puts it. The catastrophe may be foreseen. The Queen's unfaithfulness comes to light, and a council of the elders condemns her to death. Making use of an incident recorded in the life of Admiral Byron, Galt ends the play with a spectacular scene in which she is ceremoniously placed on a lone rock to perish with the rising tide. Antonio puts an end to his own life, and, with a fanatical reversion of the population to ancient custom, the new Atlantis is put to the flames.

Next in order of composition comes *The Star of Destiny*. This "dramatic spectacle" is an allegory in the form of a vision emanating from the moody imagination of a mediaeval Count, who believes that "o'er every birth a star of fate presides." The piece was written soon after Byron's *Manfred*, by which it is directly inspired. Galt, thinking "that the sublimity of Byron's beautiful drama was too refined and meditative for representation," was emboldened "to fuse the mystery of Faustus again, and to mix it with baser stuff for the use of the million." The composition is noteworthy as a typical product of the time, and as showing the ingenuity with which Galt constantly reacted to his surroundings. In a Preface which he wrote for it some years later, he puts forth suggestions for turning the stage to better account as an instrument of popular education. Coming from his as yet unmechanized age, these suggestions are strikingly prophetic of developments in the moving-

picture stage of today. He wanted to give some sort of exhibition "which should combine intellectual energy with visible magnificence," "more impressive than pantomime, and equally gorgeous in the spectacle." With an ingenious imagination far outrunning the mechanical possibilities of stage presentation in his day, he wanted "to introduce upon the stage something equivalent to books of travel. . . and, instead of acting plays, to adapt travels to representation." He suggests that the Nile and its historical banks, for example, would furnish excellent material for this purpose.

The Appeal is the one of all Galt's plays that had a real trial on the stage. Encouraged by Edinburgh friends, he selected it from the *New British Theatre*, where it had appeared anonymously under the title *The Witness*, and after he had done some remodelling it ran for four nights in Edinburgh, winged with a prologue by Lockhart and Captain Hamilton, and an epilogue by Walter Scott. Later on, it was presented once in Greenock, and several times in the Surrey Theatre with the title altered once again. It is an ingenious and original "philosophical essay," but not of compelling tragic interest. A man has been murdered, and his wife on the anniversary regularly visits the spot where the deed was committed. Regularly, too, a respected member of the community, with a show of pity, meets her there with a charitable gift. After long years, when the widow, now a wretched maniac, has come to look on the annual charity as her right, the benefactor for once fails to appear. He is openly accused of being himself the murderer. The judge, who has come on the very anniversary day to hold court in the town, and who is received at the gates by the accused along with the local dignitaries, allows the incredible accusation to be tried before him. Through a device in which the judge takes part, the guilty conscience of the man who has so long kept his crime a secret is so wrought upon that he thinks he sees the ghost of his victim come to bear witness against him. He confesses and resigns himself to justice. But it was only in an atmosphere generated by the heat of such productions as Schiller's *Robbers*, the fate tragedies, and tales of wonder, that drama like this could be taken seriously. Today it has only the historic interest of the typical.

In view of the friendly aid given by Scott for the Edinburgh performance of this play, a brief summary of Galt's relations with

Sir Walter may not be out of place here. The Epilogue, which may be found among Scott's poems under the title "The Appeal," Galt, flattered as he naturally was, calls "not only beautiful, but the only piece of humorous poetry which, as far as I am aware, ever flowed from his pen"; and he adds: "He wrote me not to mention the circumstance, as he would be pestered with applications." Non-partisan readers, I imagine, will think it of about the same sub-mediocrity as Scott's own dramatic efforts. But it *is* real evidence of Scott's friendly interest in Galt at the time of the Edinburgh performance (1818). When *Marmion* appeared ten years before, Galt in his enthusiasm contributed (anonymously) to the Greenock paper some verses in its praise, dedicated to Scott, who, on seeing them, wrote a note of appreciation to the editor, which the latter in turn passed on to Galt. Encouraged, perhaps, by this token of goodwill, Galt sent to Scott a copy of his *Tragedies* on their publication four years later. Though Scott's letter of acknowledgment no longer exists, its terms were evidently flattering.[1] Galt sent to Scott shortly afterwards his *Life of Cardinal Wolsey*, which drew from Sir Walter the long and most friendly letter of July 4, 1812.[2] It was six years later, then, in 1818, that Scott was still sufficiently interested in Galt's efforts as a playwright to provide the Epilogue to *The Appeal*; and, as far as we know, this interest—and approval—was based on an acquaintance on his part only with Galt's five *Tragedies* and *The Appeal*. It is just worth while to call attention to this sequence of events in the relations of these two men, in view of the frequent parrot-like repetition of a nice phrase from a familiar letter written three years later by Scott to Joanna Baillie,[3] in which, after urging her to read *The Annals of the Parish*, "a most excellent novel, if it may be called so," Scott adds that Galt wrote "the worst tragedies ever seen."

The lack of success with *The Appeal* was the final hint, which Galt this time heeded, that he could not conquer the stage. With the exception of a couple of amusing theatrical sketches written while he was in America, he did not attempt dramatic composition again for nearly twenty years, and then only, along with much

[1]See Grierson's Centenary Edition of Scott's *Letters*, III, 148.

[2]*Ibid.*, 146ff. Surely Grierson's biographical note on John Galt must be judged quite inadequate, and in part misleading.

[3]*Ibid.*, VI, 468 (June 11, 1821).

other versifying, as a consoling occupation in declining health. Fortunately for him—and for us—he had, however, like his great and admired contemporary Walter Scott, already turned instinctively to the field where his strength lay—the novel. Before Scott had yet opened up the great storehouse of *Waverley*, Galt had written *The Annals of the Parish*. At first refused by the publishers as flavoured too strongly with dialect, it lay dormant for some seven years. But with a successful second try in *The Ayrshire Legatees*, and the enthusiastic reception of *The Annals of the Parish* in its repolished form, Galt the realistic depicter of Scottish character in a new manner was well under way. In the eight years before he hearkened to the call of a great administrative undertaking in Canada a voluminous stream of prose fiction—over twenty volumes—had already flowed from his pen. It was, then, as a writer of international reputation that John Galt entered upon the development of the great Huron Tract in Upper Canada. During these busy three years little leisure was left for writing. When on a visit to Quebec in the winter of 1826-7, he enlivened the court circle of the Governor-General, the Earl of Dalhousie, with a farce for the amateur theatre, *Visitors, or a Trip to Quebec*, in which he had the assistance of others in caricaturing local celebrities, and in which his friend Dr ("Tiger") Dunlop played the role of a Highland chieftain,—"I need not say how; the rest of the world cannot conceive it." Again, when on a visit to New York, he wrote another comic dramatic piece, called *The Aunt in Virginia*, apparently with the incidental purpose of appeasing a slight American resentment at some references in his Quebec farce.

Soon after his break with the Canada Company Galt's health began to decline, and as he turned more and more for consolation and pastime to composition, mostly metrical in character, we are not surprised to find him attempting drama again. Four pieces at least, of considerable size, from this period exist in manuscript, and, as far as I know, have never been printed. They are "Langside, or the Royal Victim" (of the year 1835), "The Vassal" (1835?), "The Demoniack of Holderness" (1836), and "The Doom of Wallace" (1837?).

In his *Autobiography*, written in 1833, Galt speaks of a tragedy on the story of Mary Queen of Scots, written when he was about twenty-three, adding, "What became of it I know not." Evidently it turned up later among his papers, and in "Langside, or the

Royal Victim" we have this "earliest considerable work . . ., a tragedy in five acts," rewritten and shortened to three acts. The play is little more than a pathetic story in dialogue of Mary's escape from Lochleven, her recapture, condemnation, and death.

> What piteous wrecks upon the tide of time
> Do all my royal ancestors appear!
> Ah hapless me, the fiercest turbulence
> That ever pelted the ill-fated Stuarts
> Beats on the frailest relic of the race.

Another of these plays in manuscript, "The Vassal," is in five acts. Since Galt does not mention it in his *Autobiography*, we may assume, as the handwriting would also indicate, that it is among his latest compositions. Should there be no male issue but only a daughter in a certain baronial house, the Emperor (Maximilian) has the right not only to bestow the domain and title upon anyone of his choice, but also to assign the baron's daughter to him for wife. Such a case has arisen, but the daughter, Teresa, has already placed her affections upon another. A trial of magnanimity ensues when the knight selected by the Emperor realizes this, and, with the opportune introduction of Teresa's equally charming cousin as a substitute, all ends happily. The characters in the play are rather conventional, but there are touches here and there that show Galt's curious imagination and practised pen.

> Oh modesty, as it is call'd, 's a tribute
> That conscious talent pays to arrogance.

> Do I not know who in Sir Albert's face
> Sigh'd like a keyhole in a winter's night
> When some poor blast would shelter by the fire?

> Yes, he was rich, the richest of mankind,
> With more, much more, than his desires could spend.
> The residue above his wants he flung,
> As many others do corn-raising dirt,
> Among the guilty, lone and fatherless;
> For mailéd Crime, he thought, was Need in rags,
> And Need the haggard slut of Poverty.

In his next play, the tragedy in three acts with the title "The Demoniack of Holderness," Galt tries again to sketch a character of the type of Antonio in *The Apostate*,—a man outwardly estimable and of many virtues, but undermined by moral weakness. The fiction is, that William the Conqueror has rewarded the bravery of Drago, one of his followers, by making him Earl of Holderness

and giving him his own niece, Albina, for wife. After the marriage Drago becomes a very demoniac of jealousy, and accuses his wife of unfaithfulness. Though her innocence is established, she is murdered by the insane husband. The King is left stupefied with horror, that he could have been so mistaken in his estimate of a man who had rendered such high services. Perhaps the last of the longer dramatic pieces of Galt, it is a striking achievement of a week in a waning life.

The fervour of Galt's admiration of his great fellow-countryman, Sir William Wallace, may be judged from the fact that he has sought to glorify him in verse in three distinct longer pieces,—a narrative poem in blank verse, a corresponding version in rhymed couplets, and the same story thrown into dialogue form and divided into three acts. This third dramatic piece, "The Doom of Wallace," like its counterpart on Mary Queen of Scots, suffers from lack of movement in the action, and is not so good as the narrative verse forms. The closing lines are these:

Segram (who has been detailed to conduct Wallace to his doom):

Alas, great Sir, that duty
Should ever burthen me with such a task.
I dare not flinch, for duty here commands.

Wallace:

Take you this sword and wear it for my sake;
Kings have not bribes for such a man as you.
The blest centurion posted at the cross
Stood firm in duty, and believing wept.
From him the soldier learns the soldier's honour.
But come, lead on.—I have not liv'd in vain.
Loud from the ashes of the martyr's pyre
The voice of glory reaches to the heavens.
Who dies for freedom lives for ever free.

GHOST TOWN

J. Bartlet Brebner

WE had snaked our way in the car over the worst two of the water-soaked, wooded ranges between the Coast and the Valley, and had passed the sharpest cork-screws of the road up the big canyon, when we came round a corner and crashed into a jagged rock which had just fallen from the mountain-side. It lifted the front end of the car, ripped through the crank-case and bounced upright again just in time to punch a big hole in the gas-tank. We stopped and slumped back in our seats at the bottom of that windy canyon beside the roaring river, forty-five miles from a garage in one direction and sixty-five in the other. Our car's essences made rainbows in the puddles. We had seen almost no one on the road all day.

Within ten minutes along came the State of California in the person of a genial highway policeman who patrolled that road in his car once every other day. After dispensing sympathy, he produced a short, frazzled tow-rope. In another five minutes we were off on a fast, wild ride up the canyon, braking every few seconds to take up slack, almost jerking our rescuer off the road when we managed that badly, and peering through or round a windshield that was freshly drenched with red mud and gravel every time his car hit a puddle or pot-hole. From the convict camp fifteen miles away a telephone call started the Placerville wrecking car over the big mountain to meet us. Our public saviour completed the rescue by driving us to the Placerville Hotel. There we began our long vigil with the ghosts of Forty-nine, while a great corporation failed to live up to its advertised promises of promptness as it tried to locate a crank-case and a gas-tank somewhere in the length of the Pacific Coast.

During those days, Placerville, county seat, gold camp since 1848 and town since 1851, quietly but effectively confronted us with wan images of most of the elements in its exuberant past. Under the galleries in front of the stores on the main street and out among the endless acres of rock and tailings that stretched in every direction from the town, the pieces of the mosaic of the past gently clicked into place, one by one. Day by day, the bright sun diminished the snow caps on the mountains and swelled the buds of fruit-

trees which were two months behind their kin in the Valley. Everywhere little brooks flashed, or brimming, business-like ditches led downwards, carrying along water to be used by someone in washing gravel for gold.

Eighty or ninety years ago, the Argonauts had ripped the land open wherever they could direct water. Close to town there had been a Five-cent Gulch where the gold was floury, a Ten-cent Gulch where it was coarse, and a Gambler's Gulch where a busted man, with luck, could quickly pan out a new stake. Then came the armies of Chinese, bent on the laborious, ant-like campaigns which faded away about 1900. Finally, almost the whole quest was concentrated in one great mountain-eating hydraulic mine until it, too, ran out of slopes and channels and benches which it could sift with waters from its lengthy aqueducts. And now, when the real miners had gone, the "snipers" remained, most of them aged men who ditched little streams down to bed-rock channels, patched up small flumes and riffles from cull lumber, packed out to running water likely gravel from remote or overlooked channels and benches, and probed here and there in the new deposits at well-known bars and crevices after summer diminished the rivers. The town was still talking about one of them who had turned up a few weeks before with a nugget worth $150 and had savoured a week of flattering, unaccustomed attention while he drank up his fifty-dollar share of it.

Over on West Creek Gulch several of the snipers have cabins in little clearings above the stream-bed, and since 1933 they have had to tolerate some newcomers. Just off the road, on a flat where the creek-water had receded, there were two rather meagre automobile trailers, each with its children, its clothesline, and its pile of manzanita for firewood. A little further up, a young fellow with a serviceable, but worn coupé, was unlocking its rear compartment as I passed. He pulled out a shovel, a small pick, and a smooth, well-kept pan. We talked about the possible profitable effects of the "hydraulicking" for the new road that was swelling the waters of West Gulch Creek. Then, while he washed a sample pan from the bar beside us and got the faintest perceptible colouring, he explained that he had worked out three claims during nine happy months in 1933 and was spending his two weeks' vacation now on the chance of finding some more.

Up the mountain road, an old man beside a new pup tent was

putting together a flume-box and fitting in the riffle-bars. He admitted that he didn't know how big they should be and he was vague enough generally to add up merely to an old fellow puttering pleasantly in the spring sun beside a mountain brook. And, as the road circled inwards on the mountain-side to round a large stream, the noise of a pick against stone came up the gulch. Far down below, another old man could be seen picking out a bed-rock ditch just below where two little brooks came together. Every hundred yards or so, the channel was neatly ditched, and here and there little bits of flume could be seen through the scrub.

Somehow or other, the road-makers have managed to build a level, straight stretch across the mile or two of rock piles and tailings which the miners left behind when they were through with East Creek Gulch. On either side of the road, yellow pine and piñons of fairly substantial size have lifted themselves above the scrub of manzanita, thorn, and poison oak. The wind in their needles makes harmony with the ever-present sound of running water, but above both sounds come gusts of a throatier note and, sure enough, one of the streams which rushes through a culvert under the road is the muddy, red water that comes from a hydraulic mine.

There is a faint, rough track that circles the rock piles and climbs the bluffs of tailings on its way to the mine, but finding it is such a problem that it is almost as easy to dodge through the scrub for a couple of miles in the general direction of the noise, clambering over the rocks, watching out for poison oak, and picking the places to jump the filagreed brooks. The soft yellow mud is full of tracks, fresh and half-obliterated—dogs, coyotes, deer, and, surprisingly, even mountain lion. Coveys of quail explode right and left ahead. No one seems to enter this rough tangle, for the few horse tracks are only along the mine "road."

A shrill terrier guards a well set up tent when one comes suddenly and surprisedly on a level, wet, green patch of pasture, but he shows his good training by standing his ground instead of running the stranger off the claim. Just beyond is the reservoir, so full from the melting snow that it not only works the monitor whose stream is tearing down the bank, but almost overflows a good-sized ditch as well.

Two men, of fifty-five and sixty, work the mine with an occasional day's help. One contributed the claim, the other the water rights.

They shift the twelve-inch pipe, set up and direct the roaring monitor nozzle, and "high-tail" the biggest boulders in wheelbarrows out to the rock piles. They have chopped out below the bank a deep ditch in the bed-rock, into which they expect most of their gold (which is fine) to fall. At the lower end of the ditch they have gradually built and connected about forty flume boxes, in the bottoms of which poles are wedged lengthwise to serve as skids for the smaller boulders which the water sends rumbling and crashing down the rock ditch. The soupy water runs so fast that the greenhorn cannot believe that the gold can get down to the bottom and stick there, but sixty pounds of quicksilver boiling around among the sand and gravel in the ditch and in the upper boxes snatches into an amalgam whatever fine gold-dust has not already plummeted into crevices or riffles. When the reservoir dries up and the sediments are painstakingly collected and washed at the end of the five months' water season, the residue goes into the hot retort. Then most of the mercury is recovered in the cold-water tank and the partners split two or three thousand dollars' worth of gold.

The elder partner's father, he claims, brought the first monitor into the county and it can be seen in the Museum at the Memorial Hall. It lies outside in a heap of rotting timber because the kids climbed all over it as they climb all over German guns in other towns. Like the old fire-engine that came around the Horn, it is too cumbrous to be put inside the unguarded room where the Ladies' Auxiliary has collected the relics of the past. Cases along two walls contain all that they could salvage, except two fine nuggets, a remarkable dagger, and some other trifles that were too tempting to the boys from the neighbouring C.C.C. camp. There are collections of ore and mineral oddities, ancient rifles and pistols, old records of vanished fraternal lodges, a newspaper reporting Lincoln's death, and another the Battle of Manila. Articles and books that were carried across the continent receive special mention, and faded photographs, drawings and surveys picture the days when Placerville was a humming, populous hive of workers and drones. Most unexpected of the items is a bible, inscribed by John Brown as a present to John Adams, president of the Underground Railway.

An Indian murderer's scalp strikes one note of violence, but the chief blood-curdling relics are the weapons of the famous battle

between the two big Chinese tongs—vicious-looking, long-tined, steel hay-forks which the Orientals were persuaded to accept for a finish fight on the flats. Old Sandy Macintosh, the Canadian blacksmith-historian of Placerville, made them expressly for this fray.

The two tongs lined up face to face, 300 in one and 400 in the other, and harangued themselves and each other mercilessly and long, but they did not relish fighting. The encircling whites, refusing to be cheated of their fun, thereupon picked up rocks and drove the two bands at each other. One man got so much fun from emptying his revolver into the milling mass that he would not stop when bidden and had to be shot dead. It was the minority tong, however, which provided the central drama. Dropping their forks, they whisked out forbidden pistols from their sleeves, and chased their terror-stricken rivals from the field. There was a great celebration in town that night, but the price of the hilarity was ten dead and uncounted wounded.

The "Chiny" huts that used to cover the whole town area east of the crossroads have all disappeared and there are only about ten Chinese left out of the thousands who once inhabited them. The old joss-house or temple is the real monument of China in Placerville. It stands a little apart on a wooded slope by a brook, having miraculously escaped the town's many fires. But its soft wood is crumbling under winter rains, the painted banners and insignia on the outer walls are badly weathered in spite of some devotee's spasmodic efforts with the brush, and the symbolic effigies along the ridge pole and under the eaves have been battered by the winds. The smoky, dark interior, stained by time and incense, shows the effects of a leaky roof, but tarnished, dusty banners, costly, embroidered, and mirror-spangled, sharply recall the dutiful offerings of the labour armies which are gone.

Of the three surviving hotels, the New York probably succeeds best in remaining faithful to the past while trying to keep up with the present. What the barkeeper still insists on calling the dining-room is labelled "Coffee-Shop" (not yet Shoppe) on its street window, but behind the two big white-washed windows to the left of the main entrance is the bar, and directly behind it in the core of the building is the dimly-lit warren known to the townsfolk as "the gambling hall."

The barkeeper is appropriately black-haired and clean-shaven

and his bar is old style. He wears a dark wine-coloured flannel shirt and the right kind of black bow tie. He drinks whisky and water himself and keeps his customers in order and good humour. He likes to be considered something of a connoisseur of wines and spirits. Out of his lore of the American past, he was wise enough to buy shrewdly of the famous whiskies that appeared and disappeared so quickly in 1933 and 1934. His professional demeanour is an authoritative blend of the old and the new.

The gambler is not so impressive, although he is tall, lean, and dark, appears in white shirt-sleeves, and keeps a broad-brimmed black hat on the back of his head. He is a "tin-horn" by sheer force of circumstances. He makes a living, as do a few other gambling satellites, but he has to pick it up at whatever the boys are willing to play, small stakes in everything from pinochle to poker dice. Too often for a really successful man, he is driven back to gossip out on the street front with Jake, the voluble "town Indian," who manages in some mysterious way to keep his tongue lubricated with alcohol all day long.

A drowsy Saturday afternoon which had been drained of its livelier human actors by a bad film at the Memorial Hall and a well-advertised rodeo over in the Valley, was suddenly aroused when Keller, the State lion-hunter, pulled up his roadster in the middle of Main Street with a beautiful male panther draped over the right front mud-guard. He had brought in a female the day before and was living up to his reputation as the hardiest, most pertinacious, and successful cat-killer, public or private, that the county had ever seen. He timed it all beautifully. By the time the more alert of us had heard him credit it all to his pack of hounds, and the bolder kids had pummelled or felt the carcase, and the Main Street dogs had circled the car with raised hackles, he was up and away, leaving the favoured few to embroider his yarn for the late-comers and thus set a good story rolling.

Most of the tardy gossips were what friendly Frankie, the waitress down at the Café, would have called "typical old miners." They have a way of tediously and not very profitably cluttering up the bar at her place and boring her and her preferred customers with their efforts to win an audience. They disappear under cover somewhere when the sun drops behind the mountains and the air gets chill, but they pop out again, still unshaven, when the sun does in the morning. They follow its rays from bench to bench in front

of the stores, coagulate into little groups when a friend comes into town, and endlessly pour reminiscences into any ear that will listen. But only the old and strangers are willing to attend for long to the old. The youngsters greet them and pass, while the oldsters, in pairs or larger groups, each calculate from past experience how to interject, to interrupt, and by fair means or foul to get their turn to talk among their own company.

The small number of active citizens of Placerville are not openly intolerant or impatient with the old-timers, but they naturally cannot be as generous of their attention as the ancients think is fitting. The store-keepers are busy with their endless competition of window displays and shop-front face-lifting. The garage-men, the hotel and café employees and the Forestry Service are professional bustlers. When rural folk, C.C.C. boys or road officials come to town, they want to stir up their own currents of action. The county officials have comfortable offices, but discriminate shrewdly about loitering. The Army officers and men, who come and go and negotiate mysteriously about new roads deep in the mountains, are not supposed to talk and they make a virtue of that for their own inner satisfaction. Yet no one begrudges to the old men the friendly refuge of the quiet eddies along Main Street. Generally speaking, you have had to amount to something in the past in order to get to be an old-timer in Placerville. Public opinion holds that you are entitled to a few peculiarities, even if they happen to be a bit boring to others.

Nowadays the small boys and the active men quite naturally make the big garage their club-house and gossip-shop, partly as a carry-over from the ancient and honourable livery-stable tradition of North America, and partly because most of the new happenings in and about a town that has no railroad are almost sure to get connected with its principal transportation centre. We had a deep personal interest in the place which would some day restore our car in running condition, but its other charms made us quite shameless about the number of hours which we spent in talk and in the kind of casual help that was tacitly offered and accepted as compensation for taking up so much time and attention. The reward came ultimately in the form of what seems in retrospect to have been the key-note of Placerville.

The talk had got round to the one big enterprise of the day, the new road across to town from the main river canyon. The State

had secured from the quiescent "big mine" the use of its aqueduct, thirty miles long and with a five-hundred-foot drop. With that mighty head of water roaring through giant monitor nozzles, it was tearing away vegetation, soil and boulders right down to bed-rock to make a six-hundred-foot road-cutting through a slight dip in a shoulder-ridge of the mountains. When the job was done, the Company could start washing away its own mountain-side again, if it thought it worth while, including the old road with its hair-pin turns and astounding grades.

But why build the new road to out-of-the-way Placerville? Why not get on with the main road along the canyon bottom around the big bend to Hangtown at the foot of the road over the last range to the Valley? With the existing good road directly across lowlands from Placerville to Hangtown, there seemed no very good reason for a new road detouring from the canyon over the mountain to Placerville.

"Well," said the inevitable informative bystander, "it *was* a big fight. Of course, we're the county seat, and the Company helped us some, but we told our politicians we just had to have the road and we put everything we had into getting it. Why, Mac, if we hadn't, and they hadn't pulled it off, Placerville wouldn't have been nothing but a ghost town."

REVIEWS

HUMANE SCHOLARSHIP IN THE HUMANITIES[1]

E. K. Brown

To become the first Director of the School of Letters in the University of Iowa, Norman Foerster, in 1930, resigned a chair of English literature in the University of North Carolina, where he had been one of that distinguished group of scholars, now widely dispersed, that included James Holly Hanford, Howard Mumford Jones, and the late Edwin Greenlaw. He was already known as one of the few masters in the interpretation of American literature, and as one of the fewer scholars on this continent who combined with careful investigation an insight into the creative process and an insistence on the primacy in literary study of value-judgments. In Iowa, within a decade, he has built one of the most formidable of the citadels of the humanities,[2] one in which everyone is bent upon avoiding the concessions to the spirit of the age which are made daily in most departments of literature. At the core of the programme developed at Iowa is a conviction that there is such a thing as a determinable nucleus of art and letters and philosophy which all students of the humanities should know, and know well. For students of English, along with this major nucleus there is a minor nucleus—a number of great works from Chaucer to Yeats —about which subsidiary studies may gather. More original than this central requirement of a pair of nuclei—which is simply the attempt to apply to a modern literature the conception of a proper programme that used to mould courses in the classics—is the decision to approach literature in a variety of ways, each of them to be clearly labelled for what it is.

The table of contents for the present symposium indicates what these ways of approach are. After an introductory essay by Mr Foerster there follow four studies of separate disciplines, each of them contributed by a professor of English at Iowa: language (by J. C. McGalliard), literary history (by René Wellek), literary

[1] *Literary Scholarship: Its Aims and Methods*, by Norman Foerster, John C. McGalliard, René Wellek, Austin Warren, and Wilbur L. Schramm. University of North Carolina Press, 1941, $3.00.

[2] Mr Foerster's conception of university education in general has been vigorously and persuasively presented in many places, notably in his *The American State University: Its Relation to Democracy* (University of North Carolina Press, 1937).

criticism (by Austin Warren), and imaginative writing (by W. L. Schramm). Professor Manly used to say, I have been told, that in our time the study of literature had entered the phase which science had already reached as the Middle Ages were ending, a phase in which vague and unanalysed notions abound, in which procedures are followed without a clearheaded awareness of their functions, and accordingly without any adequate idea of where improvements might be sought. The need was, Mr Manly thought, for literary scholars to become more clearheaded; but, like the other masters typical of his time, Mr Manly had a tragically incomplete doctrine about what clearheadedness in literary scholarship meant. It was a mechanical doctrine. There is a notorious tale about G. L. Kittredge which represents as the main benefit of his advanced teaching that the products of his seminars checked their references twice.[3] The movement which in their methods—for in their personalities these two men were much greater—Mr Manly and Mr Kittredge represented came to its sinister completeness when in the nineteen-twenties one member of the Modern Language Association of America proposed that that body should convene with the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and another—a president—urged upon his colleagues that their goal should be *scientific* research. In such an atmosphere as these incidents illustrate, the study and practice of the arts of literary criticism and imaginative writing had a bad press. It was thought nobler to look into Milton's laundry-bills than into his mind, more significant to search for a poet's French daughter than for the patterns of his verse. The "scientific researchers" sneered at literary criticism as a mere mess of subjective impressions, in which a fagged philologist might amuse himself by dabbling in his lighter hours.

The attempt to make of literary scholarship an appanage of science is about to pass. Within a few years it will be recalled as a curious and characteristic aberration in an age in which science was so pervasive that nothing could stand against its influence. It will be remembered, too, as having accomplished a few creditable things: it *is* good to check one's references twice, even if Matthew Arnold did not. But now a more nearly adequate idea of what it

[3]On the direction given to literary studies by G. L. Kittredge, see the onslaught by Stuart Sherman, who had suffered in his seminars, "Professor Kittredge and the Teaching of English" (in *Shaping Men and Women*, 1928).

means for a student of literature to be clearheaded is coming into existence and into power. What it demands is above all not specialization in subject, but rather specialization in approach. A balanced department of English will not primarily be one which has its medievalist, its Elizabethan, its Puritan, its Romantic, its Victorian, and its American: it will primarily be a department which has its linguist, its literary historian, its literary critic, and its imaginative writer—and also, though the Iowa group is silent about this, its analyst of ideas. It will be necessary that the professor of literature become more of a theorist about his procedures: his lectures and his books should not come right by happy accident. On the need for a clearer awareness of what we are about Mr Wellek remarks:

> Theorizing on the principles of literary history has often been avoided, ironically enough, on almost theoretical grounds: an empirical mentality has prided itself upon its lack of clarity on questions of methodology. A great scholar like W. P. Ker . . . has even defended the point of view that "method is far less required in literary than in political history" since literary history is "more like a guide-book than a geography." Routine, confusion, resignation, and scepticism seem to characterize the attitude of most of those who should direct our studies.

Literary history, as Mr Wellek appreciates, is under heavy fire: for it was in literary history, narrowly conceived, that the masters of the last generation placed the centre of literary scholarship.

Literary history may redeem itself by a close alliance with literary criticism. It will in so doing cease to make its awkward courtship of science, and will demonstrate its service to art. I do not think that Mr Wellek would seriously object to the description of literary history as a handmaid to literary criticism. The purport of the new movement in literary scholarship—not only at Iowa—is to emphasize the central position of literary criticism. Why it must have this central position Mr Austin Warren sets out to show. His essay is, perhaps, too much an account of varying methods in criticism, too little an exploration of the means by which a critic may be formed. It is of slight use to show that criticism is central to the study of literature unless we are also shown how a critical method is to be acquired.

The most notable effort that has yet been made to clarify what acquiring a critical method will suppose has come not from Iowa but from Professor R. S. Crane and his associates in the

University of Chicago.[4] To their proposals and their practice the present volume makes very inadequate reference. In Mr Foerster's essay there is a brief sketch of the Chicago scheme, a sketch revised in the light of comments made upon the draft by Mr Crane. Still it is only a sketch, without the illustrations so necessary to make what is being done at Chicago intelligible to those without direct experience of it. At Chicago criticism is frankly described as the centre of an ideal literary programme. The Chicago department lays it down that

> prominence given to [knowledge of the principles underlying sound critical study of literary works and the phenomena of language] is a recognition of the fact that for good reading, good teaching and good scholarship something more is requisite than simply practice and imitation; it is essential also that the student should understand the reasons for doing what he does, and have some clearly explicit criteria for his reading and research.[5]

To lead him to evolve such criteria four disciplines are set before him:

> (i) literary criticism, or the principles of analysis useful for the understanding and appreciation of imaginative works; (ii) the analysis of ideas, or the principles applicable to the reading and judgment of writings of a theoretical or rhetorical type; (iii) history, or the principles involved in the construction of good historical demonstrations and narratives; and (iv) linguistics, or the principles involved in any systematic approach to the problems of language.

It is clear that what is sought is more than the study of literary criticism as one of the valid approaches to letters: the aim is the development of critical insight, firmly grounded, and closely applied, insight which the student will use whatever field he appropriates—literary history, the history and analysis of ideas, philology, or literary criticism in the narrower sense.

The stress in the Chicago programme would in the main satisfy Mr Wellek, literary historian as he is.[6] He confesses that the immediate desideratum is improvement in the approach to the single work of art. "We are only beginning to learn," he says,

[4]On the methods and practice of the Chicago group, one should consult the brochure *Requirements for Degrees in English* (2nd edition, 1939, University of Chicago Bookstore), and Mr Crane's articles, "History versus Criticism in the University Study of Literature" (*English Journal*, XXIV, 1935, 645-67), and "Interpretation of Texts and the History of Ideas" (*College English*, II, 1941, 755-65).

[5]This and the following excerpt are from the pamphlet mentioned in n.4.

[6]In his *The Rise of Literary History* (University of North Carolina Press, 1941).

"how to analyse a work of art in its integrity; we are still very clumsy in our methods, and their basis in theory is constantly shifting." Indeed throughout this symposium there is constant reference to the problem of adequately knowing the single work of art. To such knowledge linguistics makes its obvious and important contribution; and the kind of linguistic study pressed upon us by Mr McGalliard is what will help the student to be more easily at home in the linguistic structure of a Pope or a Milton. The critic "should be a bit better at home with Milton than the reader who must be told that 'argument' is not controversial, and that the 'subjected' plain to which Milton leads our general ancestors is merely situated below the mount of vision, not under a conqueror's heel." The examples are unduly simple, but the case is sound. Imaginative writing makes its still richer contribution: the man who has tried even a fumbling hand at a sonnet or a short story will be more easily at home in the master sonnets and short stories. Literary history, used with proper reservations, will make the most important contribution of all three: it will make the student at home in the climate of opinion, the impalpable atmosphere, in which the single work was created. Still, one would like to see a firmer underlining than comes anywhere in this volume of the primacy in approaches of the critical approach: criticism is far more than a happy and learned combination of linguistic, creative and historical knowledge.

Criticism supposes, says Mr Crane, in a foot-note appended to the introductory article, "an adequate metaphysics."[7] This pregnant suggestion is not developed by the Iowa group; and the failure to develop it is significant. In the second passage quoted from the Chicago pamphlet it was stated that one of the four approaches (or disciplines) was the "analysis of ideas"; and in the present work the importance of familiarity with ideas, and of being at home with them, is not brought out. One of the excellences of the Chicago group comes of the stress on the literature of ideas that was so steady a feature of the Chicago department in older days when Robert Morss Lovett was one of its masters, a stress not to be found then (if now) in the major English departments of the East. To such a stress Mr Wellek is actively antipathetic,

[7]It is to be hoped that Mr Crane or one of his associates will amplify this statement: by doing so the underlying assumptions of the Chicago programme will be disclosed more fully than they now are.

insisting that studies in the history of ideas lead to a confusion of criteria. Mr Warren is even farther from an adequate recognition that the study of ideas is an essential discipline in literary scholarship. The following remarkable statement comes from his essay:

> In the broadest sense literature is anything in print. At its preliminary restriction it becomes any writing which, whatever its intent, has uncommon distinction in composition and style. If we ask why Newman is literature and not Pusey; why T. H. Huxley is literature and not Tyndall; why Hume is literature and not Kant, the answer is formal. Whatever the author's motive in writing, his product—if shaped with art—becomes literature. A closer definition, however, must take account of structure and purpose. By literature we mean centrally, not Cicero, Bossuet, F. H. Bradley, but Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Racine, Balzac, Keats; in generic terms, the characteristic forms of literature are the epic and the tragedy, the novel and the drama and the lyric—the forms generalized as poetry, later as belles-lettres, and now as imaginative literature. In essence literature is neither the agreeable conveyance of information nor the transcript of what is literally true: it is an art which, through myth or fable, offers an interpretation of life.

There is so much that is dubious in this that one scarcely knows where to centre one's doubts. It is significant that of the typical figures approved by Mr Warren, five are poets and only Balzac represents prose. By what criterion is the master of the sermon (Bossuet) set securely below the master of the ode (Keats)? Does Bossuet represent the "agreeable conveyance of information"? does he convey more information than Balzac does, granted that he conveys it more agreeably? Is there any distinction intended between the "agreeable conveyance of information" and the "transcript of what is literally true"? Was it just to represent the prose of classical antiquity by Cicero instead of by Plato? would Plato also stand in the company of F. H. Bradley, securely below Racine and Keats? Was it just to represent the prose of Victorian England by Bradley instead of by Carlyle or Ruskin or Arnold? Is it certain that a myth-maker like Racine is more central to what is great in literature than a personal commentator like Montaigne or Ruskin?

Of late years a great deal has been written about the place of myth in art. The resurrection, as a criterion, of the mythological is allied with the new craving for objective rather than subjective "transcripts," and in many varying ways the emphasis on myth has done much to give to the arts a firmer pattern and a more universal substance. But the centrality of myth as a criterion is open to huge questions. The chief myth-makers in contemporary

English literature, Yeats, Joyce and Eliot, are not self-evidently superior to the personal commentators they succeeded, writers such as Wordsworth, Carlyle and Thackeray. In this journal it is suitable to recall what Professor W. J. Alexander said in his inaugural lecture at Dalhousie:

> You remember that the *Elements* of Euclid are included in the material of our study, as well as the *Œdipus* of Sophocles, but that in the works of Euclid, as compared with those of Herodotus, we found but little to detain the merely literary student; because the former is a statement of purely objective fact, while the latter contains also a subjective element. And, in general, it is true that the less purely objective the thought is, and the more the author impresses on it his personality, his emotions,—sets it before us not exactly as it is, but as it appears to him, the more does the student of literature find himself concerned with it. Of such weight, indeed, is this subjective factor, that, while without doubt all written thought comes theoretically within the domain of literature, yet the term literature is often used to the exclusion of purely objective works, like those of Euclid.[8]

To these remarks it is necessary to propose one extension: a man may be as subjective in the choice of his ideas as in anything else in his work, and in the manipulation of his ideas a Carlyle may reveal the quality of his being as fully as a Swinburne reveals the quality of his being in the manipulation of his metres or a Yeats in the quality of manipulation of his images.

For other positions asserted by Mr Warren there is not space in which to advance the multitude of objections that arise at once. It may be suggested, however, that the place of ideas in literature is much larger and much nearer the centre than is dreamed of in Iowa, and that one more freely at home with ideas would not have written exactly as Mr Warren has written.

To make sure that students of literature are freely at home with ideas will also help to persuade them of the need for a metaphysics. God forfend that literary scholars should set out to supply a metaphysics for themselves, but unless they are at home with ideas how can they make sure that the metaphysical basis they adopt is an adequate one, neither flimsy, nor rotten, nor cranky?

The essay on imaginative writing raises a special problem. It seems to me to repose on premisses that are arguable. The separation between scholar and imaginative writer seems to Mr Schramm "unnatural and damaging." By what standard is it unnatural?

[8] W. J. Alexander, *The Study of Literature* (Nova Scotia Printing Co., 1884).

Where and when has the state supposed natural existed? The English school at Oxford, the French division at Paris, have had no close relation with the most original writers of their time. Now and then an imaginative writer is at home in an academic circle. It was so with Robert Bridges who relished almost everything in a university, even its pageantries. It appears to be so with Mr Frost who has served as an ornament and more than an ornament in Michigan, Amherst and Harvard. In general, however, the great imaginative writers have found universities unpalatable, even as undergraduates, and I should expect to find them among barflies rather than in the audience when a professor of English literature is lecturing, even if the subject be Hemingway. That the schism between the two is, in an ideal sense, damaging, no one would question; but it should be frankly conceded that the scholar will gain far more from commerce with one creator than any creator could gain from the most intimate association with a whole department of English. This contrast is not as favourable to the creator as may appear: the scholar has greater ability to learn than the creator has, or, at least, he learns in a more direct and predictable fashion. Mr Schramm, although his parish is the art of writing, is really thinking of what the writer could do for the university rather than of what the university could do for the writer. In defending the peculiar Iowa practice of accepting as a doctoral dissertation a piece of imaginative writing, he says: "The discipline we have been describing is comparable both in quality and in severity with the discipline of any other advanced literary study." Even Mr Kittredge would, I think, have conceded that it was comparable in severity, and indeed it is obvious that the strain of composing any notable imaginative work is very great indeed, much greater than the strain of writing a thesis on Bath in the eighteenth century, great learning and labour as such a thesis requires. But I am unable to perceive — although Mr Schramm argues his case with great vigour and much felicity of illustration—how the writing of a novel can be comparable in the *quality* of the effort it evokes with the writing of a piece of literary history. The activities are incommensurable. The verdict must, I think, be that Chicago has been wiser than Iowa, that the prescription of analysis of ideas is superior to the prescription of imaginative writing as one of the four disciplines in literary scholarship.

That a department should have projected a book such as this, in which its aims and methods are particularized, is in itself a great thing. Whatever its gaps and defects, the book is good, and what will be better is the stimulus and rebuke to other departments in which the procedures followed are not self-conscious. None of us has the right to remain uninterested, or unwilling to express in the clearest terms he can find what it is that he is seeking to accomplish when he teaches and when he publishes.

THE TURK AND THE FRENCH MIND* — A. F. B. Clark

The appearance of this massive and fascinating book at this particular moment is an example of that perfect and ironic timing of which destiny—for, in this case, the author can have had nothing to do with it—has the secret. This study of the total impact (political, intellectual and moral) of the greatest Oriental power of the Renaissance period upon the leading Occidental state of the time comes to us at the very moment when the most powerful Western state of our day embarks upon a life-and-death struggle with the greatest of modern Asiatic empires; this demonstration of the quiet and subtle yet profound role that the spectacle of an alien culture may play in the intellectual and moral evolution of a given people, this marshalling of evidence to prove the interdependence of human communities, is brought to its triumphant conclusion just in time to have a narrow escape from perishing itself in the fires of the latest Armageddon.

Yet, if these ironies are of the bitter sort, destiny has provided a counter-irritant in the strange, and let us hope, symbolic manner in which, out of the inferno of Europe, the copy of the book that lies before me came into its author's hands. Professor Rouillard had just finished and returned all his proofs to his French printer when France collapsed and communications ceased. Fifteen months later he received (through what channel he does not know) two copies of his book: his first knowledge of its fate. Let us pray that such a beneficent and mysterious hand may salvage all the good things of our civilization.

*_The Turk in French History, Thought and Literature (1520 - 1660)_, by Clarence Dana Rouillard (vol. 13 of Etudes de Littérature étrangère et comparée, dirigées par Paul Hazard et J. M. Carré). Paris, Boivin et Cie, n.d. (1940?), 700 pp.

It would have been tragic if so much goodwill, so much precious time, such industry, such patience, such careful ordering of a vast material, such intelligence in drawing inferences, such a flair for the significant and the piquant had gone for nothing and the results had entirely perished. Things are bad enough as they are. For the time being at least, Professor Rouillard's book will be a war-casualty, for it will not get the widespread attention it deserves. And this is a misfortune, not only for the author, but for the world of scholars; for this book has a potential appeal to a wider audience than its title might indicate. I am therefore glad of the opportunity afforded me to mitigate in some measure the injustices that fate has showered on Professor Rouillard by introducing this important book to the audience of the QUARTERLY at least.

This volume appears in a series devoted to studies in Comparative Literature, and the first thing to note about it is that it realizes all the potentialities of that rather unluckily named discipline with a completeness that has few precedents. Comparative Literature continues to be the academic Cinderella, partly because of the "isolationist" illusions which still blind the separate humanistic departments in universities to the complex realities of history and life, but also partly because of its own misleading nomenclature. Both the adjective and the noun are unfortunate, the latter because it suggests exclusive preoccupation with "pure art" (themes, forms and style), the former because its ambiguity ranges from the dilettante extreme of irrelevant "comparisons" of Shakespeare with Racine, Virgil with Milton, etc., to the pedantic extreme of the standardized Ph.D. thesis-study of "sources" and "influences." But the goal envisioned by the true "comparatiste" has always been something of much more vital human significance than such trivialities, nothing less indeed than the study of the total impact of one human culture *in all its aspects* (political, economic, social, religious, scientific, philosophical and artistic) on another. (Once this grand goal of "comparative" studies is grasped, justice can be done even to minor contributions which constitute humble blocks in the ultimate grandiose structure.) I do not see how the validity of such a discipline can be questioned in a world that is so obviously suffering on account of its inability to realize or to admit its own solidarity, its essential unity-in-diversity. I know of no other department in the curriculum that is addressing itself to this urgent problem, and therefore I can

only conclude that, as long as our universities continue to slight "Comparative Literature" (or whatever else you choose to call it), they will have to be held guilty of evading one of their main functions as civilizing agencies.

This digression on Comparative Literature was necessary to explain why I attach such importance to Professor Rouillard's book and why I say that it goes far towards realizing all the potentialities of that field of research. Its author has aimed at nothing less than the registering of every ascertainable point of contact between the French mind and Turkish civilization between 1520 and 1660, that is to say during the period when Turkish prestige was at its height and the Ottoman Empire held Western Europe under the double spell of its exotic strangeness and its menacing power. The original project of Professor Rouillard, indeed, had a wider scope; it aimed at a general study of Orientalism in French literature prior to the eighteenth century. This was found to be too broad a field for thorough study and was narrowed down, first to the influence of the Near East, and finally —by the elimination of the Persian, the Arab and the Moor—to that of the Turk, "fittingly enough," as the author says, "for it is an indisputable fact that the Turk was the first and remained the chief symbol of the Orient in French eyes during the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries." Although the main study limits itself further to the important period between 1520 and 1660, there is an Introduction of sixty pages which sketches the history of Franco-Ottoman relations prior to 1520. The author announces his intention of extending his study of these relations to the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries at some future date; and it is to be hoped that he will not flag or falter in this laudable design.

Now, what do I mean by the remark I made above to the effect that the author aims at "the registering of every ascertainable point of contact between the French mind and Turkish civilization"? The most feasible answer to this question, under my limitation of space, may be made by reproducing (with appropriate commentary) the main headings of the admirable table of contents. After the introductory chapter, referred to above, the book is divided into four unequal parts. Part I (pp. 61-166) deals with the "Historical Background and Official Relations between France and the Ottoman Empire"; chapter I of this Part is entitled "The

Role of the Turk on the European Scene and its Chronicling in Contemporary French Pamphlets, Histories and Newspapers"; chapter II treats of "Diplomatic Relations between France and Turkey, with some Account of Commerce and Religious Missions." The most piquant aspect of this section—in view of the contortions of international diplomacy in our own time—is the story of how Francis I, after posing as the champion of a new crusade against the "infidel," suddenly—after his defeat by Charles V at the Imperial election of 1519—seeks the "encirclement" of Austria by a Franco-Ottoman alliance. A picturesque episode in this connection is the wintering at Toulon of a Turkish army whose good discipline and peaceful behaviour were a revelation to the French, fed on tales of Turkish ferocity and barbarism. The important embassies of Césy (who brought back the story of Bajazet that Racine used) and La Haye to the Sublime Porte are also described, as well as early Turkish embassies to the French court which gave French stay-at-homes their first opportunities to see authentic Turks.

Part II (pp. 167-286)—a very interesting section—is devoted to "The Portrayal of the Turk in French Geographical Literature." Chapter I deals with "The Contribution of Books of Travel and Description to French Knowledge of the Turk"; the number of books devoted to the Turk, his government, religion and *mœurs*, during this period is astonishing and shows the tremendous contemporary interest in the subject. It was largely from these books that Frenchmen drew the new ideas about the Turk and his civilization which led to the "transvaluation of all values" which is studied in Part III. Chapter II is entitled "Pictorial Representations of the Turk," and is in part a commentary on the fine reproductions of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century engravings illustrating many aspects of Turkish life (particularly costumes, scenes in Constantinople, national types like dervishes, veiled women, priests), which are scattered throughout the book and which do much to enhance its interest and value. What a role these engravings must have played in inaugurating the taste for Oriental exoticism is obvious.

We now come to Part III (pp. 287-418), which (though it cannot be entirely dissociated from Part II into which it dovetails) is, to my mind, the most engrossing part of the book and the one in which the author makes his most valuable contribution to the

general history of thought. The very title of this Part will be an eye-opener to many readers. It is "The Role of the Turk in the Development of Ideas in France" (chapter I, "Signs of Broadening of Opinion and Self-criticism in Travel Literature"; chapter II, "Turkish Leaven in the Writings of French Essayists and Moralists"). That the Turk should have stimulated the taste for the exotic will be conceded by many; but how can the Turk have influenced the development of ideas in France? The answer is: by powerfully reinforcing the incipient trend of the Renaissance towards a re-examination of the accepted traditions and assumptions of Christendom. The travellers and writers mentioned in Part II reported that the cruel and lascivious Turk, the infidel of the medieval crusading tradition, turned out, on closer examination, to have many admirable qualities; his armies were better disciplined, not only in war but in peace, than those of the West; justice was better administered in Turkey than in France; advancement in the public services came through merit, not birth; charity to the poor was more widely practised; there was more sobriety in eating and drinking, and less ostentation in dress; there was more honesty in business; more respect was shown by Turks for their false religion than Christians showed for their true one. It was evidently possible, therefore, to be an infidel and yet to have many virtues. Now, any student of the *philosophe* movement, the "Enlightenment" of the eighteenth century, knows that one of its most powerful weapons was the trick of "dissociating" ideas, of showing, for example, that morality can exist without religion. But the Turk furnished the *philosophes* with an even more potent weapon. With the increasing study of this civilization, so utterly different from the European in all its standards yet obviously vigorous and self-contained, the traditional view that truth was one and universal gave way to the view that truth in all realms is perhaps relative, and that the religious, political, social and moral institutions which spring from a given people's needs are those that are *true for it*. It follows that very soon the Turk, and later other Orientals, came to be used as a weapon in the hands of the opponents and satirists of the orthodox Christian tradition; and so we come finally on the path to masterpieces like the *Lettres persanes* and *Zadig*.

We now come to the last—and longest—section of the work, the one the average reader has perhaps been most impatiently

waiting for, Part IV (pp. 418-640), "The Turk in French Imaginative Literature" (chapter I, "The Turk in French Drama"; chapter II, "The Turk in French Prose Fiction"; chapter III, "The Turk in French Verse"; chapter IV, "The Turk in the Ballet"). Yet I must confess that—through no fault of the writer but simply owing to the quality of the subject-matter—I find this the least interesting part of the book, and I rather regret that the unquestionably logical organization of the material has necessitated this psychological anti-climax. The French imagination (being in a state of suspended animation at this period) did not react to the Turkish "scene," the Oriental "local colour," with a vigour at all corresponding to that with which the French reason (being at its apex of efficiency) reacted to the Turkish philosophy of life and its implications. Superficially and quantitatively, Turkish themes and backgrounds do play a surprisingly large role in the drama and fiction of this period, and it was indispensable that Professor Rouillard should bring this out. The layman who thinks that Oriental exoticism in France begins with *Bajazet* and the Turkish ceremony in *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, will learn with astonishment that fifteen tragedies on Turkish subjects had appeared before 1660 and that Mademoiselle de Scudéry's Turkish novel, *Ibrahim ou l'illustre Bassa* (1641) is loaded with colourful descriptions of Ottoman ceremonies and processions. This is, indeed, strictly speaking, the beginning of exoticism—but a very faint one. The word hardly takes on the meaning it evokes for the modern mind until the mere cataloguing of foreign paraphernalia is illumined by the flash of poetic imagination. The Turkish tragedies cited above do, indeed, mention "janissaries" and "mutes" and "seraglios" and "the Castle of the Seven Towers," but otherwise the Sultans and Sultanas talk the same language as Rodrigue and Chimène. The scenes evoked by Mademoiselle de Scudéry have brilliancy but no glamour; their realistic garishness suggests "the Turk in technicolour" rather than *Kubla Khan* or *Les Orientales*. Still, all this evidence that the Turk had seized hold of the French imagination as well as of the French intellect needed to be brought out, and the author has done this part of his job, like all the others, with exemplary thoroughness.

I hope that this inadequate survey of Professor Rouillard's closely-packed book has at least made clear that not only the student of literature, but also the student of history, the student

of religion and, above all, the student of the modern liberal movement in thought will neglect this volume at his peril.

I hope also that the appearance of such a book by a professor in a Canadian university (Professor Rouillard is a member of the Department of French in University College, Toronto) is a portent. That peculiarly Canadian variety of Pococurante who is too proud to write—or to commend those who do write—still holds too many of the key positions in the humanistic departments of our universities. But of late there have been some signs of a stirring among the dead bones in those departments, and it may be that a younger generation of scholars is going to give the lie to the cry of despair I heard one of its own most brilliant members utter as he surveyed the Canadian intellectual scene: "Our national sterility is something dreadful to contemplate."

AMERICAN FICTION BETWEEN THE WARS* — PHILIP CHILD

The author of this study of eight contemporary American novelists avows the hope that it may enable some conclusions to be drawn "as to the general temper of our times—at least in fiction—the prevailing attitudes toward human nature and society, the dominant philosophy of life." To that end rather than to a consideration of fictional technique the author's criticism is, therefore, mainly directed. The novelists considered are Dos Passos, Hemingway, Faulkner, Thomas Wolfe, Caldwell, Farrell, Marquand, and Steinbeck. All of them belong to an era of American life which began on November 11, 1918, and ended on December 7, 1941—the dates speak for themselves. Writers who only two years ago were post-war have become *inter-war* novelists, and historians of the future will read the novels discussed in this book for the light they may throw on an isolationist America, preoccupied by social and economic problems, which was none the less moving unwittingly towards her world destiny as a defender of the rights and dignity of man.

In a previous book, *The Twentieth Century Novel*, published in 1932, Mr Beach complained of a lack in contemporary American fiction "for which I can find no word but that one of strictly

**American Fiction: 1920-1940*, by JOSEPH WARREN BEACH. Toronto, Macmillan, 1941.

European connotations 'soul' (*âme*, *Seele*).... What I have in mind may perhaps be denominated simply quality in human experience, the sense on the part of the author of value in personality." If Mr Beach was right—and if the following years have yielded no work to belie his judgment—then it must at first sight seem a strange irony that the continent which spawned the soul-destroying robotry of fascism should also have nurtured the modern novelists most keenly aware of value in personality, while the United States, approaching her destiny as co-defender of the dignity of human individuality, should have produced no figure comparable in this respect with, let us say, Thomas Mann.

In this book Mr Beach does not precisely reverse his early judgment, but in the intervening years the *reason* for the "lack" of which he wrote in 1932 has become clear to him and perhaps to most of us. What before the Depression we might have imputed to deficient sensitivity on the part of American novelists now seems rather an inevitable reflection of changed values in the spirit of the time. The novelist, sensitive to the atmosphere of the thirties, could no longer study the *âme* or *Seele* of a human being simply as a "thing in itself," for he had come to think of man as the class-conscious pawn or instrument of a Social Revolution. Society rather than the individual human character became the measure of humanity—"Society" often modified by the label "bourgeois." In a world of machines, "soul" had lost its dynamic hold upon the emotions; in its place appeared such words as "social injustice," "rich," "capital," "worker": the emotional coins of bedevilled men who desired to merge the "too littleness" of their individual personalities with some cause or other which would transcend that littleness. The human being of the thirties was like Bernardine "desperately mortal," but unlike him not "insensible of mortality." How should the novelist be content to write merely of the "soul" when there was wanting in the modern atmosphere something essential to the full stature of a man as a being of spirit? "In Farrell," writes Mr Beach, "it is not physical undernourishment from which the Lonigans and McGintys and O'Flahertys are suffering; it is spiritual undernourishment—it is want of a humane culture adequate to satisfy the normal demands of men and women with energies to be employed and with minds and hearts and imaginations to be fed." Hence the novelist shifts his emphasis from man as microcosm to the macrocosm "Society" which contains and frustrates him. So

> Dos Passos . . . [bids] us observe in rich and poor, in failure and success, among the crude and the refined, the withering effects of materialism in action. Hemingway . . . confines his exhibit for the most part to types and situations below the threshold of bourgeois "culture." Faulkner shows us a decadent society haunted by the ghosts of slavery and caste. . . . Caldwell presents another aspect of the same unhappy South. . . . Marquand shows us the dried pods of once juicy New England culture rattling their withered and infertile seeds like peas in a clown's bladder.

To Dos Passos, Caldwell, Steinbeck and possibly Hemingway, Mr Beach imputes an inclination towards Marxian materialism; that is, a disposition to trace back states of mind and moral attitudes to the material conditions to which the person or group has been subject. Indeed it seems clear enough that in American fiction Marxian materialism has given a new lease of life (and an emotional drive) to naturalism. Mr Beach remarks:

> The materialism of these men is best interpreted as an effort to bring the moral world within the framework of the natural. The natural is that which is subject to uniform laws and susceptible of explanation and understanding. In this it is opposed to the supernatural order, which is taken to be above explanation and understanding. . . .

Mr Beach admits that these novelists do not represent everything in our life and nature; but he finds them genuinely typical of their period. "By one consent they have taken for their subject that unsettlement and instability which we must acknowledge to be a characteristic feature of our life both material and moral. They are all realists in the sense of making no concession to the demand for fiction as a vehicle for wishful thinking." They are, therefore, writers in revolt and Mr Beach is right in pointing out that many of their novels imply "a scale of values appreciably different from that held by the average reader into whose hands they will come." They are, for all that, the most potent and significant novelists of the interbellum era.

These eight novelists are concerned to represent the social chaos—as they deem it—out of which cosmos may emerge; they have on the whole less to say about specific plans for a new society: after all, the role of the novelist is rather to represent the present than to vaticinate. Possibly, though, the historian of the future, reading these novels of the unstable thirties, may see reflected in them the glow from a certain forge at which will have been fashioned, in time and after much suffering, the world order which defeated the cynical "new world order" of the Archimago of Berchtesgaden, in the world war of ideas.

ONTARIO AND CALIFORNIA*

H. A. Innis

This book is a detailed record of the life of a classical scholar, written after retirement from academic life, and published three years after his death at the age of seventy-six in 1938. He was born at Crown Hill, attended the secondary school and the collegiate institute at Hamilton, and, after working as an apprentice druggist, secured his diploma from the Ontario College of Pharmacy. From his training as a druggist, he acquired a knowledge of Latin which served as a background to the honour course in classics in University College. After a year of graduate work on a fellowship he became classical and English master at Brockville High School. From there he proceeded to Johns Hopkins University for postgraduate work, and was appointed lecturer in University College in 1888. Following the uncertainties in the University of Toronto after Sir Daniel Wilson's death in 1892, he accepted an appointment to the Classics Department of Stanford University in 1893, two years after its founding. For those interested in the history of the University of Toronto there is a wealth of detail as a brief reference to the very long index of names will suggest. It will be sufficient to mention the names of the late Principal Hutton, Professor W. J. Alexander, who on winning the Gilchrist Scholarship was honoured by a declaration of a half holiday in the Hamilton Collegiate Institute, President H. J. Cody, "perhaps the only one to whom I have ever given one hundred per cent on an examination paper," Professor J. C. Robertson, who stood first in the final year of his course. For those interested in the development of classics on the Pacific coast, in the academic life of Stanford University, in relief work during and after the first World War, in academic work at Amherst College and at Harvard, in archaeological work on the Mediterranean, and in congresses of classical scholarship, numerous details, chiefly concerning the author's experiences, are given and references to an enormous number of friends and acquaintances will be found in the index. The book includes numerous photographs.

But fascinating as the details may be, the significance of the volume lies in its record of the great stream of influence on classical

*_Warming Both Hands: The Autobiography of Henry Rushton Fairclough including his experiences under the American Red Cross in Switzerland and Montenegro._ Foreword by Ray Lyman Wilbur. Stanford University Press, 1941, $3.75.

scholarship which Toronto exercised on the universities of the United States. Professor Fairclough was steeped in the traditions of Ontario and University College, and the tenacity with which he held to those traditions is reflected throughout every page of the book. He went to a new university in the United States, established when President Eliot's influence in favour of what has been called "liberalizing" education was being felt. "Stanford became known far and wide for the liberality of its program of studies." Of the students' undergraduate work "two thirds . . . was purely elective; and the only compulsory subject was English Composition." While Professor Fairclough concedes the advantages of the system, he points to its limitations. "The average student will naturally follow the line of least resistance and will eschew studies which involve hard work, especially when their utility is not obvious. Coming as I did from a university which recognized a classical foundation as essential for all university work, and especially for all literary, historical and philosophical studies, I was startled, to say the least, to find that at Stanford Latin and Greek, besides being merely optional for admission, were not required of students even when 'majoring' in such departments as Romance Languages or English Literature." The character of the academic work is described in earlier pages. Classes were conducted "in the Brockville, rather than in the Toronto, fashion, that is, in the manner of a school rather than of a university." The Registrar supplied little books in which records of attendance, daily recitations, "quizzes" and examinations were kept. Work was prescribed in advance for the next meeting of the class. "At Stanford . . . it seemed to me that teaching tended to conform to pass, rather than to honor, standards. At any rate, even in my first year there, I became well aware that I could not expect such accuracy and thoroughness of work as I had been accustomed to in Toronto. Very few undergraduates seemed to aim at real excellence, and I soon discovered that it was not feasible to raise the ambition of a class above a comparatively low level of scholarship." Advanced and graduate students "were almost all like my honor men at Toronto, while the undergraduates, generally, resembled Toronto pass men. There were, of course, striking exceptions to the rule." The teaching work involved "more class-room hours; but the nature of the work at University College had been much more difficult and had called for more laborious preparation on the

teacher's part." The description suggests that the elective system tends to favour "shopping about" on the part of the student in order to secure the largest number of grade points with the least possible difficulty. From the standpoint of the staff it involves teaching a large number of students with diversified backgrounds, and places an emphasis on teaching capacity rather than on scholarship. The place of administration is enormously enhanced not only in the central offices but also in the departments. Staff and students are profoundly influenced by the elective principle.

One is tempted to compare the honour system of University College in Professor Fairclough's period with that of the present. On the first page of an appendix the reading list of the Toronto fourth-year Honour Classical Course in 1883 is printed with the comment that it involved at least one-third more reading than was required in 1896 and "twice as much as was outlined in 1928. In 1883 thirty different Greek and Latin authors are enumerated; in 1928 there are only eleven." The change suggests that the classical reputation of the University of Toronto has not been maintained. John Morley has pointed to the "most impoverishing characteristic" of modern civilization in "the excessive supremacy claimed for physical science"—a reaction to the excessive supremacy formerly claimed for literature in the schools and universities. Federation of the University was in part a result of the swing toward the physical sciences and their expansion has been evident under the honour system in the Faculty of Arts, and in the professional schools. The demand for staff and equipment accompanying this expansion has increased the difficulties of the relationship between the Colleges and the University. In the Arts Faculty the drain of students from college to university subjects has meant increased demands on the University for funds. And the Colleges have been unable to provide adequate support for a teaching staff, even with higher fees. With separate departments for classical and modern languages in each College, the difficulties of securing a unified approach to the problems of teaching and scholarship have been great. University departments have become more highly specialized under the honour system and college subjects have been progressively eliminated from prescriptions of their courses. In self-defence, the Colleges have attempted co-ordination of work but they have been compelled to retreat from the high standards described by Professor Fairclough. Efforts of university departments to secure effective

co-operation with college departments are continually thwarted by complexity, and lack of uniformity. Except in graduate work, it is extremely difficult for a university department to prescribe courses which will enable its students to take advantage of the scholarship of a single individual in any one of the Colleges. Co-operation in graduate work is weakened through inability to secure co-operation in undergraduate work. Not only are the teaching resources divided among four separate departments in each subject, but the central direction which would facilitate the building up of library resources is lacking or extremely weak. Solution of this problem, if a proper balance is to be restored between the physical sciences and literature, is imperative. And no subjects will suffer more from failure to secure a solution than the social sciences. The elective system does not provide the answer; nor does the present honour system under the federation structure.

We are grateful to the memory of Professor Fairclough for presenting the problems of classical education and incidentally of modern culture. His account of experiences with two systems is valuable for California and Ontario.

THE HOLMES-POLLOCK LETTERS*

F. C. AULD

THE *Holmes-Pollock Letters* need not the word of reviewers to recommend them to lawyers. The eminence of the writers, their outstanding contributions to legal science and the administration of justice, the unusual characters of both men in breadth of learning and variety of interests—these were bound to assure for the book an immediate and hearty welcome by those who study law and practise it. The book could not fail to be interesting and valuable. On first thoughts, one might say that it was a book that wrote itself; but even a casual reading will reveal the enormous amount of labour that must have gone into the task of deciphering, arranging and foot-noting. The highest credit is due to Professor Howe and his assistants for their work, which is a model of editorial care and skill. Mr Palfrey, who is Holmes's executor, has used the

**Holmes-Pollock Letters: The Correspondence of Mr. Justice Holmes and Sir Frederick Pollock, 1874-1932*, edited by MARK DEWOLFE HOWE, with an Introduction by JOHN GORHAM PALFREY. In two volumes. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1941, $7.50.

wide powers granted by the will with great judgment, and for what he has done (and not the least of his contributions is a very valuable Introduction), and for what Sir John Pollock, Bart., has done in fullest collaboration, the legal world is grateful.

This review addresses itself generally to those who are *not* lawyers, who know Oliver Wendall Holmes only as the son of a distinguished and beloved man of letters, and as an outstanding member of the Supreme Court of the United States, and who know Frederick Pollock only as one of the scions of a notable English family, and the writer and editor of legal treatises too numerous to mention.

If it were only that this book is a record of an interchange of ideas for nearly sixty years between two acutely observant men of affairs, one in America and one in England, it could hardly fail of interest. It is, however, more than that. The letters reflect a friendship that has in it a rare quality. These men had much in common. In Mr Palfrey's words: "Both were endowed with inherited legal traditions. Both were deeply engrossed in the origin and development of the English Law. Both viewed its development in the imaginative manner, in its relations to the whole of life. Both looked at life through the glasses of philosophy, science, art and letters. Both possessed, each in his own way, the gift of phrase and the happy touch in lighter vein."

Holmes was born in Boston on March 8, 1841, of a family known not only for its literary attainments but for its legal traditions. He entered Harvard, as might have been expected, and left his studies to serve, with distinction, in the Civil War, where he was thrice wounded. He was called to the Massachusetts Bar in 1867, and for some years thereafter practised law in Boston. The cares of business, however, did not submerge that interest in philosophy and jurisprudence which his environment and traditions had fostered. He early became a lecturer at Harvard, the editor of the *American Law Review*, the editor of Kent's *Commentaries*, the author of a book, *The Common Law*, which gave to the study of legal history a new impulse and direction; and he began to develop that robust pragmatic philosophy which, with some hesitancies that the *Letters* reveal, remained with him throughout his life. He held, and he taught, that "the life of the law has not been logic; it has been experience." In 1882 he was appointed an Associate Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts. In 1902

he was appointed to the Supreme Court of the United States, and retained that high office until his retirement in 1932. He died on March 6, 1935.

Pollock was born in London, on December 10, 1845, of a family which has included many distinguished jurists, clerics and statesmen. He was educated at Eton and Cambridge, was made a Fellow of his college (Trinity) in 1861 and was called to the Bar (Lincoln's Inn) in 1871. He immediately began that laborious routine of study which was to result in the production of his *Principles of Contract* and *Law of Torts*—books which have been found well-nigh indispensable by successive generations of students. Pollock, however, was far from being a cloistered recluse. True, he spent much time in the academic groves—he was for many years Corpus Professor of Jurisprudence at Oxford, and a Reader at the Inns of Court; but he was more than that. He was one of the founders of the *Law Quarterly Review*, for fourteen years its editor, and a regular contributor until the time of his death. He was a consummate legal draftsman; and his codification of the law of partnership was not only the basis of the English Partnership Act, but the model and pattern for partnership statutes throughout the English Commonwealth and in the United States. He lacked something of Holmes's *bonhomie*, but he had an exquisite appreciation of cultural values, and withal, an extraordinarily generous appreciation of viewpoints other than his own. He was a philosopher whose mind was cast in a radically different mould from that of Holmes; and not the least of his works was a critical appreciation of *Spinoza: His Life and Philosophy* (1880). His honours were many: his baronetcy descended to him from his father—his other distinctions he won for himself. He became a member of more learned societies than perhaps he could remember; he was made a Bencher of Lincoln's Inn and ultimately became its Treasurer; and he was gratified at his appointment as Judge of the Admiralty Court of the Cinque Ports (an obsolete but honorific station), and amused, and perchance disappointed, that no proceedings were instituted in that court before him. He lived long enough to take an active interest in the collection of these *Letters*, and he died on January 18, 1937.

Holmes and Pollock first met, in London, in 1871; but it was on Holmes's second visit to England, with his wife, that the acquaintance ripened into friendship. Thereafter, until 1901, there were

occasional meetings in England and in America. In the course of this long and cordial friendship, in which the wives shared, there seems to have been no single rift or jar; and Holmes, who had no children of his own, had an affectionate interest in Pollock's son and daughter.

Perhaps the most delightful thing about these letters is that they grow more youthful as the writers grow older. In the early letters, the correspondents are feeling their way, staying cautiously by legal topics. As the years go by, the minds come closer together, and there are confidences, mellow with experience, as, for instance, in a striking phrase, when the elderly judge tells the elderly baronet that "the chief end of man is to form general propositions and no general proposition is worth a damn."

It would be impossible, in the short scope of this review, to give an idea of the wisdom and gaiety and charm of these letters; but the reviewer is tempted to make a summary of two of them.

The judge begins a letter with a comment upon Taft's scheme for international jurisdiction, and adds, acidly, that he will be glad if Taft "has said anything worth saying when so many drool." There is a brief reference to Haldane and his Berlin visit of 1912—Haldane "whom I have liked for many years." He goes on to say that in his work there is a little breathing-space—a day or two: "I have taken the moment to read a little Fichte and Aristotle and Remy de Gourmont's *Le Latin Mystique*." He discusses that grim classic, the *Dies Irae*. And then,—but he must speak for himself:

> Somehow I was transfixed by "Ave Stella Maris." *In primis* how came the image? I bet through the suggestion of Maria—but anyhow the picture brings tears to my eyes. The one great star in the sky and the expanse of the ocean beneath, vivified by the reflection of the gleam. Similarly I have been rearrested by two lines of a Southern poet recalling the war:
>
> "And only in our dreams the guns
> peal, and the flag is seen."
>
> You hear the cannon in the word guns, and how ghostly the flutter of the lost flag. Well, I must go and attend to business. I think much of you in these days.

Then comes a final sentence: "When you receive this I shall be near to turning the corner of my third quarter century."

The baronet, writing in reply (this was in 1916), is coolly and wittily depreciatory. He sums up his analysis of the unfortunate Frenchman by saying: "I doubt whether R. de G. realized the difference between mystics and ordinary ministers to edification.

By the way, it's a pity Wm. James did not know more of the Middle Ages when he wrote on varieties of religious experience. Huysman's preface belongs to an offensive kind of affectation which already stinketh. Would the war have made a man of that creature?" Then follows a criticism of a new law book, an appreciation of Robert Bridges and his *Spirit of Man*, the announcement of a purpose to read Tolstoy's "infantile moral tales," and a query, "Is there anywhere, outside of big books on the Constitution, a compendious account of the manner in which Abraham Lincoln understood and exercised his executive war power? Some folks here need to learn it."

This last was a lure, dangled before a veteran of the Civil War. Did he take it? Of course he did. So, from letter to letter, in the pages of this delightful volume, the old jurists carry on their exhilarating pursuit of literature, law, the sciences and the arts. *Quidquid agunt homines . . . .*

SHORTER NOTICES

Literary Criticism: Plato to Dryden, edited by ALLAN H. GILBERT; *Pope to Croce*, edited by GAY WILSON ALLEN and HARRY HAYDEN CLARK. New York, Chicago, *et al.* American Book Company [Toronto: W. J. Gage and Company]. 1941. ($4.40 each)

The Art of Literary Criticism. By PAUL ROBERT LIEDER and ROBERT WITHINGTON. New York, London: D. Appleton-Century Company. 1941. ($3.50)

WHATEVER may be said of the state of humanistic studies today, this at least must be recorded: never have the printed aids to these studies been so numerous, so competent and so attractive as they now are. Large and highly organized classes in a great number of institutions have created a demand not only for handbooks but for collections of basic texts, and editors and publishers have co-operated to supply the demand with books which are sometimes works of genuine scholarship and are often of value also to the general reader. One recalls such admirable ventures as *The Student's Milton*, edited by Professor Patterson for Crofts; the Aristotle and the Plato issued by Random House; the many excellent period anthologies in English literature; and, a more

individual effort, Miller and Johnson's *The Puritans* (American Book Company; Toronto, Gage). And now there are added to the list two anthologies in the history of literary criticism from Plato to the present century.

Literary Criticism, with its two volumes, has almost twice as many pages as *The Art of Literary Criticism* and can print representative selections from some seventy critics as against thirty-seven: a fact which gives it a large initial advantage. The first superiority of *Literary Criticism* is its much more adequate representation of those authors who are truly basic: Plato, Aristotle and the so-called Longinus. Its second superiority is the inclusion of 240 pages translated from the historically important and relatively inaccessible critics of the Italian Renaissance, wholly absent in the smaller collection. Its third superiority is a fuller representation of foreign critics throughout: not merely Goethe, Schiller, Ste-Beuve and Taine, but these and Mme de Staël, the two Schlegels, Schopenhauer, Hugo, Nietzsche, France, Zola, Brunetière, Bergson, Croce; while among American critics it adds to Poe and Henry James: Emerson, Lowell, Whitman and Howells. Its fourth superiority is in its introductions and notes. There are, however, points at which *The Art of Literary Criticism* supplements the larger collection, adding, among essential authors, Quintilian, Boileau (the preface to Longinus), De Quincey, Bagehot, Tolstoy and Conrad. And in some instances the selections are different (e.g., Dante, Jonson, Addison, Schiller, Hazlitt, Pater, and in part Ruskin and Arnold), while in one or two instances (notably Coleridge) they are more extensive.

Neither of the two anthologies makes any serious attempt to illustrate contemporary trends in criticism, where values are not yet finally determined and where copyright opposes its barriers. It is momentarily disappointing, but not at all surprising, to find Spingarn and Babbitt and More, T. S. Eliot and Edmund Wilson, unrepresented. Some earlier omissions are less easy to account for. It is a strange notion of the *Art of Literary Criticism* that can omit Charles Lamb and Anatole France. And in *Literary Criticism* we look in vain for Scaliger, for Bacon and Hobbes, for Boileau, for Addison on the imagination, for Blake, Wordsworth and Coleridge on the same subject, for Burke on the sublime, and for Herder and others on primitive poetry: in other words, for the means of studying both the Neo-classical and the Romantic positions on

poetry. *The Art of Literary Criticism* makes the claim to represent "practically all the problems . . . that have confronted critics from classical antiquity"; but this is a claim which even *Literary Criticism* (as we have just seen) cannot fully sustain.

The true aim of *The Art of Literary Criticism* is to teach the art by a critical study of models. The emphasis and tone of the book are practical rather than historical, and pedagogic rather than scholarly. The bibliography has some curious inclusions and some more curious omissions. A few of the latter may be listed: Ker's great edition of Dryden's *Essays* and Shawcross's of Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*; Alden's *English Critical Essays of the Early Nineteenth Century*; Cook's editions of Sidney and Shelley, and J. C. Collins's of Sidney and Pope; Cowl's *Theory of Poetry in England* and Vial and Denise's *Idées et doctrines littéraires*; Brandes' *Main Currents of Nineteenth-Century Literature* and Oliver Elton's *Surveys*.

Literary Criticism, despite the one or two lapses noticed, is a much more serious work of historical and critical scholarship; and this is particularly true of the first volume. There Professor Gilbert has put us heavily in his debt, not only by his selections from the Italian critics, but by the first English translation of Aristotle's *Poetics* to be based on Gudeman's text. His bibliographies are always relevant and usually strikingly complete (we may notice, however, the absence of Padelford's translations from the *Poetics* of Scaliger); and his introductions and notes are unfailingly learned and suggestive. In the second volume Professors Allen and Clark follow the model furnished by their predecessor, but do not always achieve his originality, pertinence, completeness and weight, though they surpass Professors Lieder and Withington in these qualities.

Such anthologies are a response to American mass instruction with its desire to have the basic texts securely between two covers. But (as we hinted at the outset) it is usually possible to give the market something better than its minimum demand; something better is certainly given in these volumes, and especially in Professor Gilbert's.

A. S. P. W.

The Pattern of Politics: The Folkways of a Democratic People. By J. T. Salter. New York, Toronto: The Macmillan Company. 1940. ($2.50)

A few years ago Professor J. T. Salter published a revealing study of urban political life under the title, *Boss Rule, Portraits in City Politics*. The eminent qualities of the earlier work appear in his present extended essay, *The Pattern of Politics*, which explores the political *mores* of America and illustrates its theme with inimitable stories of voters and politicians. This volume reminds one most of Graham Wallas's classic *Human Nature in Politics*, and it is high praise to say that many of the illustrations have the same telling quality. The theme of the book is expressed in the sentence: "Where there is life, there is politics, and where there is politics, there is an unending struggle between the common good and the private interest." The politics referred to here is the management of men under the democratic régime, and in the United States such management has revealed a wide repertory of methods from the crude antics of Big Bill Thompson to the refined but unerring skill of Franklin D. Roosevelt. There was nothing sophisticated in Thompson's advice on how to deal with opponents: "If your opponent calls you a liar, you call him a thief, or if the newspapers attack your moral character, you can charge a kept press. The voter will not know what to believe." Here also are samples of the arguments whereby candidates win success. There is the ex-convict elected to Congress in Minnesota on the plea, "Other men have gone to the penitentiary *after* they have served in Congress. Help me to go to Congress now; I have already served my term in jail." And there is the ever-smiling Josh Lee of Oklahoma, who won a rural constituency by his expressed sympathy for everything rural, including the hens in the barnyard. "When I was young, I sold eggs at five cents a dozen. Why, just think of it! An egg is a day's work for a hen." He was concerned about the surplus cotton crop, as were his audiences, but he had encouragement in the suggestion: "How many Chinese are there? Say 400,000,000. Now they all wear shirts made out of cotton. If each of their shirt tails were lengthened only one half an inch, Oklahoma's surplus cotton crop would disappear overnight."

But this book provides something more than entertaining stories of the makeshift appeals of politicians in the stress of elections. It suggests the nature of the basic springs of democracy

and the conditions on which alone it can function well. In this matter it offers no special prescriptions, and the complaint might justly be made that even its diagnosis is too sketchy. It does not attempt to marshal evidence in that quantitative fashion which has come to characterize modern studies of the political process. But where such studies usually repel all but the specialist, this vivacious essay can be placed in the hands of the ordinary citizen in confidence that he will read it. In any case, pages of statistical tables can add little to an understanding of those stray and almost indefinable elements which enter into political leadership. Professor Salter does not presume to answer all the questions, but in most readers he will arouse the desire to know more about the pattern of modern politics.

A. B.

Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy, 1587-1642. By FREDSON THAYER BOWERS. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. 1940. ($3.00)

THIS is the most thorough study yet made of the Elizabethan Tragedy of Revenge, its origin, development, the ethical influences affecting it and the inter-relation of the plays. Although one may disagree with some of the particular findings and be irked by a tendency to unnecessary repetition, there can be nothing but praise for the careful scholarship and the lucidity with which the intricate matter has been reduced to a convincing pattern.

Revenge Tragedy, it is shown, passed through four fairly distinct phases. It had its start in *The Spanish Tragedy*. There Kyd blended Seneca with the heady stuff of the fashionable Italian *novelle* and, with a rare sense of the theatre, brought actually within the play the murder for which revenge was sought. His ingeniously contrived plot became a store-house of ideas for later playwrights. The pure Kyd tradition, in which blood-vengeance was a duty and in which the tormented hero ponders the problems of life and death, had its apotheosis in *Hamlet*. With Chettle's *Hoffman*, still directly under Kyd's influence, the change which differentiates the second phase was already apparent. The protagonist was now the villain, often the Machiavellian villain after the older example of Marlowe's Barabas, and the depiction of horrors and tortuous intrigue tended to overshadow the revenge theme. The outstanding plays in this phase, made great by subtle charac-

terization and by poetry, were *The Duchess of Malfi* and *The White Devil*. The third phase, stretching from about 1620 to 1630, reflected the growing disapproval of revenge. By their attitude the dramatists were in a manner answering the Puritan attack against the morality of tragedy. Massinger in *The Fatal Dowry*, Middleton in *The Changeling*, and more questionably, although Mr Bowers has no doubt, Ford in *The Broken Heart*, exemplified the change. In the final phase, which lasted until the closing of the theatres, both the older philosophical and the later moral interests had gone. The aim was frank sensationalism. Shirley alone, by his adroit craftsmanship, was able in *The Cardinal* to make reputable drama from the crude raw stuff.

This partial summary inevitably ignores the finer points in Mr Bowers' thesis, his initial account of the changing public attitude towards revenge, his analysis of plot structure and of the relation in idea and specific feature of play to play. Yet it is in this last-mentioned aspect of the study, when the influence of dramatist on dramatist is being assessed, that one is inclined at times to demur. Is it just, for instance, to hold that "Kyd's Lorenzo was the prototype of Barabas and that the action of *The Jew of Malta* is merely an elaboration of similar action in *The Spanish Tragedy*"? That is surely making too much of a surface likeness. What is attributed to a direct "influence" can often be better explained by the demands of the accepted story. But such occasional over-eagerness to discover influences does not really affect the general argument or detract from the value of an admirable contribution to our knowledge of the Elizabethan drama.

R. S. K.

The Forgotten Gospel. By CEPHAS GUILLET. Dobbs Ferry, N.Y.: The Clermont Press. 1940.

THE author, a graduate of the University of Toronto, is described as the nearest living relative of Henry D. Thoreau. His book seems to confirm the claim by its air of detachment and its trenchant criticism of the social order. Christian civilization from the days of Paul down to contemporary Jeffersonian democracy is brought under judgment; no lapse from the faith once delivered to the saints is overlooked, and in tracing out through the centuries the waywardness of Christian social praxis the author shows *il a le nez fin*.

His thesis is simple and straightforward. Jesus was a normal

man—perhaps the first normal man who ever lived, the Son of Man, in truth. His Gospel was the promulgation of the principles on which a Kingdom of God can be set up on the earth. It is a Gospel of universal and timeless worth to men, since it is concerned with this world rather than the next. But this Gospel was never tried out because Paul destroyed the incipient effort to found the Noble Society by substituting for it a Church with a theology directed to a heavenly Kingdom. The Gospel of salvation by the Cross to a life beyond the grave mediated through a select set of persons withdrawn from the world and professing to control the keys of heaven, frustrated the purpose of Jesus to bring about the true Communion of life and goods in human society. The Church in the Roman Empire, marked by compromises with pagan society and by lust for power and self-aggrandizement, evidences the corruption of the primal ideal. The religion of the Middle Ages, in whatever guise it appeared, was following the traditional ecclesiastical pattern of thought. The Kingdom of God on earth was forgotten in its rage to gather a colony of heaven and also, in travesty of the words of Jesus, "to compel them to come in." Monks, friars and ascetics were essentially self-centred, and substituted the welfare of their orders for the welfare of the Kingdom. With the rise of a capitalistic society the Church identified its interests with those of the upper classes, and has ever since wasted its energies fighting the vice and crime of a hopelessly bad society based on Force, instead of using that energy to create the good society based on Love. Modern secular attempts at social reform, such as Communism, Socialism, Fascism, Nazism, must fail because they are based on force or racial prejudices or political intolerance or materialism, or violation of the rights of personality. The only sufficient answer to these "isms" is the Christian Communion. "The Kingdom of God will be given to a nation bearing its fruits."

The book is weak on the practical side. It fails to show how the pure ethic can be applied to the complex economic and political life of a society that is Christian only in name. But the author's warm faith commands attention, and his frank indictment of the *mores* of our world provokes serious reflection.

W. R. T.